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Operational activities for development segment

**Summary record of the 14th meeting**
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday, 1 March 2018, at 3 p.m.

*President*: Mr. Pecsteen de Buytswerve (Vice-President) ..... (Belgium)

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*In the absence of Ms. Chatardova (Czechia), Mr. Pecsteen de Buytswerve (Belgium), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

*The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.*

**Agenda item 7: Operational activities of the United Nations for international development cooperation** (*continued*)

**(a) Follow-up to policy recommendations of the General Assembly and the Council** (*continued*) (A/72/124-E/2018/3, A/72/684-E/2018/7 and A/73/63-E/2018/8)

**(b) Reports of the Executive Boards of the United Nations Development Programme/United Nations Population Fund/United Nations Office for Project Services, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, and the World Food Programme** (*continued*) (E/2017/34/Rev.1, E/2018/36 and E/2018/65)

1. **Mr. Salarzai** (Afghanistan) said that the Council must use the reform of the United Nations development system to better integrate the humanitarian, development and peacebuilding dimensions of its work. A "whole-of-system" approach was critical in countries that were implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development while dealing with conflict or humanitarian crises. In that regard, he supported the proposal contained in the report of the Secretary-General (A/72/684-E/2018/7) to use the operational activities for development segment to enhance guidance on the development system's coordination with humanitarian assistance and peacebuilding efforts. Furthermore, resident coordinators should be better prepared to work across the development-humanitarian-peacebuilding continuum, and inter-agency mobility, including across United Nations pillars, should be incentivized to strengthen the pipeline for future resident coordinators. The Council's role as an intergovernmental space for reinforcing the Organization's transition to a culture of prevention and focus on results should be consolidated, and the establishment of the Joint Steering Committee to advance humanitarian and development collaboration was also welcome.

2. The creation of a new generation of United Nations country teams and the reinvigoration of the resident coordinator system must be underpinned by the objectives of increased quality and efficiency and better coordination of operations in host countries. Those objectives entailed reducing transaction costs at all levels, and respecting national sovereignty and ownership of the development process. Afghanistan hosted a significant volume of United Nations operations and a special political mission; as such, he looked forward to a strengthened development system that would better support his Government, and was hopeful that dual reporting lines along with strengthened accountability would result in greater impact on the ground through the achievement of collective results under United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs).

3. A revamped regional approach was crucial. Countries in special situations, in particular least developed countries and landlocked developing countries, needed tailored support for regional connectivity and economic cooperation. The United Nations development system must better align its regional activities with countries' priorities and needs, and ensure that the regional economic commissions built synergies with other platforms for implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

4. **Mr. Buttigieg** (Observer for Malta) said that his delegation supported the Secretary-General's reform agenda, which would not only strengthen the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, but would also allow the United Nations to evolve in response to new and emerging challenges, to continue leading with authority and to fulfil its ultimate aims of serving, supporting and protecting. All States must engage in the discussions on repositioning the United Nations development system, irrespective of their size or international standing, for the reforms to be truly representative, State-driven and State-owned.

5. As part of the reform process, the United Nations should identify areas where it performed well and others where it might benefit from partnering with other international organizations. The current proposals of the Secretary-General were a step towards increased impact, visibility, accountability and relevance for the Organization on the international stage. More impartial and independent resident coordinators would benefit United Nations country teams, which should also be restructured to enhance coordination and increase impact on the ground. With regard to the proposed funding compact, the system must be modernized and made flexible, sustainable and cross-sectoral. Partnerships with the private sector and other international organizations, including international financial institutions, could provide a broader and more diverse contributor base. It was important to identify areas where savings could be made in order to reinvest them in the United Nations development system.

6. The regional development architecture should be evaluated with a view to eliminating duplication of work and streamlining the system, and the functioning of the Council could be improved through the elimination of inefficiencies, such as unnecessary bureaucracy.

7. **Ms. Fladby** (Norway) said that as a major contributor to the United Nations development system, Norway wanted to see better common results and enhanced efficiency gains. Norway supported the vision of the Secretary-General for further reform.

8. Specifically, it welcomed the proposal concerning a new generation of country teams based on the agreed priorities of UNDAFs. The country teams should also embody the values of the Charter of the United Nations, and international norms and standards. Resident coordinators must be impartial and imbued with authority. There should be a reporting line from country representatives to the resident coordinator, and substantially enhanced joint resource mobilization, possibly beyond what had been agreed in the quadrennial comprehensive policy review. Moreover, the resident coordinator system needed sufficient and predictable funding.

9. Accountability was crucial for achieving results and enhancing confidence in the United Nations; as such, Norway was confident that the Secretary-General would ensure that all managers, particularly senior managers, were made accountable for common results and engagement in the reform efforts.

10. Reform also placed demands on Member States. The proposed funding compact was a way to reverse the trend of increasingly fragmented funding. Better delivery at country level, which could be assessed on the basis of well-documented country results and cost savings, would be the litmus test for the success of the reforms. Therefore, commitments to such results and savings should be included in the compact. Mutual commitments must be complete and monitored.

11. The overall reform efforts required the United Nations development system as a whole, and all its constituent entities, to implement all the provisions of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review. The report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 71/243 (A/73/63-E/2018/8) showed that there was still much work to be done on that front. For instance, the ability of development system entities to track the resources used for gender equality and women's empowerment remained limited, yet gender mainstreaming was a prerequisite for sustainable development and ensuring that no one was left behind. Stronger, concerted efforts were needed in that regard.

12. **Mr. Munir** (Observer for Pakistan) said that the process of reforming the United Nations development system and its outcomes should be guided by the following six principles: poverty eradication; a continued focus on development; national ownership and leadership, and accountability to Governments; development work as part of a continuum with humanitarian work and peacebuilding efforts; scaled-up and predictable core financial resources; and the coverage of gaps in the Sustainable Development Goals.

13. The proposed demand-driven model for the new generation of United Nations country teams should be underpinned by measures to enhance their capacity to support the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 6 on water and sanitation; Goal 7 on energy; Goal 9 on infrastructure and industrialization; Goal 13 on climate change; Goal 14 on sustainable use of the oceans; and Goal 15 on sustainable use of ecosystems. In addition, country team configuration and presence should be determined in consultation with Governments.

14. Reform of the resident coordinator system must ensure that resident coordinators were accountable to Governments, with clear reporting lines and no political role or function; that their development focus was not undermined by mobility across the United Nations pillars; that no single entity had full responsibility for the resident coordinator system, for the sake of impartiality and independence; and that funding arrangements did not create any additional burdens for developing countries.

15. Comprehensive reform of the development system at the regional level was critical to achieving the desired coherence, efficiency and effectiveness. The proposed United Nations system-wide strategic document (A/72/684-E/2018/7, annex) would also need to be overhauled once the shape of the reform of the development system was finalized. The system's current inability to address gaps in implementation of the 2030 Agenda was a matter of concern.

16. **Mr. Fialho Rocha** (Observer for Cabo Verde) said that delivering as one, supported by the Joint Office in Cabo Verde since 2006, had resulted in a well-integrated UNDAF that aligned the country's national development strategy with the 2030 Agenda. As such, the experience of Cabo Verde could usefully inform the development of a new generation of United Nations country teams and the reinvigoration of the resident coordinator system.

17. In order to leave no one behind, the reform process must incorporate mixed responses and solutions that addressed both the competitiveness and resilience needs

of small island developing States and middle-income countries. The transition from the Millennium Development Goals to the Sustainable Development Goals implied a need for increased integration and interconnection. The greater number of objectives necessitated the presence of more United Nations agencies as part of country teams; however, the reticence of some agencies to join UNDAFs and the decline in resources were obstacles that the reform process should address.

18. **Mr. Paust** (Germany) said that Germany was willing to contribute to the reform of the United Nations development system as best it could. Member States should work together, and member organizations of the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) should engage fully with the reform process, even if it had implications for their material autonomy. Germany would monitor engagement carefully through the different executive boards of UNDG members to make sure that the unique reform opportunity was not wasted.

19. Germany strongly supported the general direction of the reform and would actively participate in the upcoming negotiations on the reform package. It particularly welcomed the proposed strengthening of UNDAFs, efforts to streamline United Nations country teams and the goals of delinking and strengthening resident coordinator functions. However, in view of the criticisms of the previous development system, the future role of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) must be defined still more clearly. Germany supported the organizational restructuring of the United Nations Development Operations Coordination Office to enable it to better exercise its independent oversight role over the resident coordinator system, as well as the ambitious and swift reprofiling of the regional-level structures.

20. His delegation also supported the proposed funding compact and shared the Secretary-General's analysis that the financing mechanisms of the United Nations development system needed to be modernized. Germany agreed to formulate proposals for the implementation of the compact and to explore to what extent better financing could be provided. However, certain issues needed to be clarified first, such as which specific commitments would be made in exchange for donors providing better quality funding.

21. **Mr. Chandrtri** (Observer for Thailand) said that his delegation hoped that the input provided on the repositioning of the United Nations development system would be incorporated into the President's summary of the operational activities for development segment and fully taken into consideration by the co-facilitators in their preparation of the relevant draft resolution on the repositioning process.

22. Echoing the Secretary-General's remarks at the opening of the segment, he said that full implementation of the 2030 Agenda was under threat, trust was being eroded and multilateralism was being questioned. It was important to keep faith in the United Nations system and the reform process. Member States should convey their positions frankly, while remaining open and flexible; after all, they bore a shared responsibility for making the United Nations fit for purpose in order to better serve people.

23. **Ms. Amadeo** (United States of America) said that the success of the reform initiative would ultimately be assessed on whether it advanced truly sustainable development on the ground. Proposals for improving country-led coordination and coherence, strengthening transparency and accountability, rationalizing field presence, ensuring independent evaluation and making business operations more efficient could contribute significantly to such success. Many of the proposed reforms could and should be taken under the existing authorities, but other areas needed refinement.

24. While fully supporting better cohesion and coherence across agencies, she did not believe that a merger of executive boards of funds and programmes would help to achieve that goal, and neither would a resident coordinator system funded by assessed contributions. Greater system-wide policy cohesion and oversight of the funds and programmes could be achieved without weakening their accountability to their boards or to Member States.

25. The United States supported the call for a reinvigorated resident coordinator system, with resident coordinators who were independent of any one agency and served solely to lead United Nations country teams towards achieving a greater impact. However, funding the resident coordinator system through assessed contributions would politicize the system and diminish its independence. Rather than a wholesale reconfiguration, it was preferable to make the minimum changes necessary to ensure the system's independence. The proposal of funding the resident coordinator system from the regular assessed budget contradicted the principle that the operational activities for development of the United Nations should remain voluntary and grant in nature, in accordance with the quadrennial comprehensive policy review. Instead, the United Nations should continue to use the voluntary funding model, with dedicated streams of funding sources, including donor contributions, inter-agency cost-

sharing, and/or agency contributions from their cost recovery income.

26. She called for a sharper focus on efficient and effective outcomes that would help those in need. If Member States worked together and championed truly bold but sensible reforms, the United Nations would emerge as a stronger, more effective, more just and greater force for peace and prosperity in the world.

27. **Ms. Gueguen** (France) said that the reform process should address all three dimensions of sustainable development. The cornerstone of the reform, the reinvigoration of the resident coordinator system and the reconfiguration of United Nations country teams, should result in the appointment of resident coordinators with the authority, skills and means required to fulfil their mission of coordinating the country teams on the ground. The reform should also give resident coordinators the legitimacy they needed in the eyes of agencies, funds and programmes, as well as host Governments. Resident coordinators should be well-positioned to put in place coherent policies, in coordination with humanitarian and peacekeeping actors, in order to contribute to the peace-security-humanitarian-development nexus.

28. The adaptation of United Nations presence on the ground should allow the Organization to focus on those most in need — the least developed countries, fragile societies and small island developing States. The reconfiguration of country teams should lead to streamlining of the system, which would include the secondment of experts from the specialized agencies, funds and programmes to field structures, and the sharing of offices and support services.

29. France remained committed to extensive reform of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the regional economic commissions. Those institutions should work efficiently, collaboratively and coherently, making use of their proven comparative advantages and avoiding duplication of work, in order to capitalize on their sustainable development expertise. France was committed to supporting the Secretary-General in the reform process to implement the ambitious 2030 Agenda.

30. **Mr. Viera Salazar** (Ecuador) said that a flexible approach should be taken to the repositioning of the United Nations development system, to ensure that it responded to the needs, visions, realities and specificities of each country and region.

31. The composition, skills, and programmatic focus of country teams should reflect the conceptual paradigm shift embodied in the Sustainable Development Goals. The United Nations development system's country presence should also be tailored to meet national needs and priorities, while taking into account the 2030 Agenda and other internationally agreed goals such as the New Urban Agenda. Consolidating the physical presence in countries was important, but entities should not suspend their work during that process. Instead, they should be made more effective and interconnected.

32. The resident coordinator system should be a model of integrated work that accelerated achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. The development system must support countries to mobilize resources, including by providing financing and capacity-building in support of economic objectives such as sustained and inclusive economic growth, industrial development, infrastructure development and economic diversification.

33. Marginalization of the regional dimension of development must be avoided and the scope of action of the regional commissions should not be restricted. The latter should continue to work on such areas as financing for development, macroeconomic policy and urban development. Similarly, while it was vital to have a clear structure that eliminated overlaps, direct interaction between the regional commissions and Member States should not be overlooked and, if anything, should be enhanced. Ecuador wished to maintain its current level of interaction with the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean.

34. **Mr. Locsin, Jr.** (Philippines) said that the process of aligning the United Nations development system with the mandates of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review was still in its initial stages. As it advanced, the overarching objective, eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, must be kept in view. However, addressing some forms of poverty in some of its dimensions straight away would already be worthwhile. That would necessitate moving away from traditional methods of evaluating development — on the basis of macroeconomic indicators — to evaluation criteria that focused on enlarging human capacity.

35. The reform process must be underpinned by efforts to address the specific challenges faced by middle-income countries. That mandate, as contained in both General Assembly resolution 71/243 and the 2030 Agenda, would affect the design of the new generation of country teams and the reinvigoration of the resident coordinator system.

36. The United Nations development system must address the specific Sustainable Development Goals identified by countries as priorities, and accelerate the shift, in terms of focus and resources, from the

Millennium Development Goals to the Sustainable Development Goals. In addition, a realistic funding mechanism was needed; the decline of core contributions must be addressed and no additional burden placed on programme countries.

37. National leadership and ownership must be the bedrock of UNDAFs and guide the work of all United Nations country teams. The United Nations should work through Governments, not around them. It was essential that UNDAFs were not politicized, and that achieving the Sustainable Development Goals remained the priority.

38. **Ms. Kalamwina** (Observer for Zambia) said that the United Nations development system reforms should lead to concrete outcomes for enhanced implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The development system should be responsive, and meet countries' different development needs, a factor to be taken into consideration especially in the reconfiguration of United Nations country teams and the resident coordinator system. Sovereignty, leadership and ownership of national development processes must guide the repositioning, and the differences in national development levels, capacities, and realities on the ground should be taken into account.

39. Eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions must be kept in sight, as the overarching objective of the reform proposals. The quadrennial comprehensive policy review was the main instrument for better positioning the United Nations development system and for building the capacity of developing countries, particularly vulnerable landlocked developing countries such as Zambia.

40. Increased regular and sustainable funding for the United Nations development system and the 2030 Agenda was needed to bolster national efforts to foster national sustainable development. As such, improved core funding for the United Nations development system was of critical importance.

41. **Mr. Kulikov** (Russian Federation) said that, while his country supported the main aims of the reform package, many issues still needed to be discussed. Significant spending was proposed on the reforms and on the centralization of management, yet the positive impact the reform package would have was not clear. Since the United Nations development system was a unique structure with a capitalization of $30 billion, an extremely balanced and considered approach to its reform was needed.

42. In the quadrennial comprehensive policy review, Member States had agreed on a course for the further improvement of the United Nations development system, including on system-wide aspects of the work of the programmes, funds and specialized agencies that participated in efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. As such, the Russian Federation was not prepared to act on an "all-or-nothing" principle regarding the reform package or certain of its provisions that went beyond, or ran counter to, the quadrennial comprehensive policy review. In particular, it was not necessary to recreate the resident coordinator system, or to give resident coordinators new competencies. The proposed model did not appear to take into account the collegial joint principle governing management of the resident coordinator system that was enshrined in paragraph 53 of General Assembly resolution 71/243. There was insufficient basis for the recommendations and no alternative scenarios were presented.

43. The assertions regarding the efficiency of merging the Executive Boards of the New York-based funds and programmes were contentious. It was doubtful that combining them would cut costs, particularly given the differences in the membership and size of the Executive Boards, and in view of the proposal to organize an additional session of the operational activities segment of the Council in Geneva. Given that the agencies had specialized mandates, combining their Executive Boards might in fact intensify competition among them, and increase bureaucracy. Moreover, such a step was unnecessary: system-wide matters could easily be discussed in the existing operational activities segment.

44. Given the existing difficulties in funding the development system, creating new entities, such as the proposed independent system-wide evaluation unit, seemed problematic. Although the possibilities for conducting joint evaluations were currently limited, the option of separating off one of the most important functions of the development system, instead of strengthening it on the basis of the Joint Inspection Unit and the United Nations Evaluation Group, did not appear to be optimal.

45. The outcome of the discussions on the Secretary-General's proposals should be a consensus document based primarily on implementing the provisions of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review and meeting the needs of the most vulnerable countries.

46. **Mr. Tierney** (Ireland) said that the Secretary-General's report (A/72/684-E/2018/7) provided a strong basis for moving forward. Ireland supported the focus on empowering resident coordinators to improve the coherence of United Nations country teams. The continuing focus on least developed countries was important, as was the need to improve coordination with the World Bank and the other international financial

institutions. Ireland particularly welcomed the new ways of working being devised, including the strengthening of country-level outreach, beyond United Nations country teams, to civil society, the private sector and other stakeholders. The United Nations could not achieve everything on its own.

47. Ireland would continue to provide flexible and coordinated funding to the United Nations development system, and to support pooled funding, which, if properly targeted, could catalyse achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. His delegation looked forward to the proposed dialogue with the Secretary-General regarding the funding compact. Ireland was currently reviewing its aid policy in order to better respond to the challenge posed by the Goals. Differences would inevitably emerge as the reform process advanced, but progress had already been made and should be encouraged further: the perfect should never be the enemy of the good.

48. **Mr. Gomez** (Observer for Sweden) said that the purpose of the reforms was to ensure that the United Nations development system had the capacity to support countries in delivering on the 2030 Agenda. The development system must act coherently at the country level, taking a flexible approach tailored to country needs. United Nations country teams must be able to combine operational and normative support across all the dimensions of sustainable development. For instance, they must be able to access gender, humanitarian, human rights and peace and development advisors as needed.

49. An effective United Nations at the country level required strong leadership. Sweden fully supported the proposals to ensure impartial, independent and empowered resident coordinators. However, independence must dovetail with increased authority, beyond a mere coordination mandate. Resident coordinators must have access to significant funds to incentivize collaboration and catalyse system-wide activities, as highlighted in the reports of the Secretary-General on repositioning the development system (A/72/124-E/2018/3 and A/72/684-E/2018/7).

50. Lastly, improved and adequate funding for the United Nations development system was needed. Sweden welcomed the proposed funding compact. However, for the compact to work, the development system must regain the trust of Member States through results-based management, system-wide results, cost effectiveness, long-term impact, accountability and transparency. Member States had a responsibility to act coherently and ensure more long-term, predictable and flexible funding to the system.

51. **Mr. Gayito** (Observer for Ethiopia) welcomed the Secretary-General's ambitious proposals to reposition the United Nations development system, in particular their focus on fostering national ownership of efforts to reduce poverty and promote sustainable development. The proposed reforms must support developing countries, especially least developed countries, by paving the way for the emergence of a new generation of United Nations country teams capable of responding to the national priorities reflected in UNDAFs. While reinvigorating the resident coordinator system would be a positive step towards enhancing transparency, effectiveness and coordination at the national level, the proposal to fund the system through assessed contributions should not impose an additional financial burden on developing countries. Regional economic commissions such as the Economic Commission for Africa must also be strengthened. In addition, an adequate, predictable and flexible funding mechanism that addressed the imbalance between core and non-core resources was required in order to enhance the Organization's efficiency and ability to fulfil its commitments under the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, and funding programmes should be aligned with national development plans. Scaling up global partnerships would also be critical for the effective and timely implementation of the two Agendas.

52. **Ms. Khyne** (Observer for Myanmar) said that the configuration of United Nations country teams should be determined in consultation with host Governments. Country teams must respond to national development priorities and ensure the active involvement of host Governments in formulating and implementing UNDAFs. Similarly, resident coordinators must maintain their focus on development, under the leadership of host Governments, and must be strong sustainable development professionals. Her delegation looked forward to the concrete recommendations, to be formulated at the funding dialogue proposed by the Secretary-General, on how to ensure predictable and sustainable funding for the United Nations development system without imposing additional programme budget requirements.

53. In line with the 2016 quadrennial comprehensive policy review, Myanmar strongly supported the enhancement of local and global partnerships, in particular collaboration between the United Nations development system and international financial institutions in support of the 2030 Agenda. In that connection, her Government had recently established a development assistance policy containing the first

comprehensive set of policy guidelines on the effective and transparent use of development assistance. Greater efforts should be made to address the challenges faced by least developed countries, including by continuing to allocate development funding to them as a matter of priority, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 71/243.

54. **Mr. Sandoval Mendiolea** (Mexico) said that Mexico was participating in the adaptation of the United Nations development system to the demands of the 2030 Agenda and appreciated the initial measures taken by the Secretary-General in that regard, in particular the appointment of the Deputy Secretary-General as UNDG Chair and the establishment of the Joint Steering Committee to advance humanitarian and development collaboration.

55. His delegation welcomed the Secretary-General's proposals on country teams and resident coordinators and agreed that UNDAFs, negotiated with host Governments and aligned with national development needs, should be used as a road map for the activities of agencies, funds and programmes. In view of the proposed separation of the functions of the resident coordinator and the UNDP resident representative, he sought clarification on the intended use of the contributions that some Governments were already making to maintain the presence of UNDP in-country.

56. The proposals to strengthen the work of the United Nations development system at the regional level must take into account differences between regions and subregions in order to avoid a one-size-fits-all approach. In that connection, in the General Assembly, Mexico would seek to ensure the strengthening of the mandate of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean.

57. The Council's deliberative role must be enhanced to ensure optimal follow up of the 2030 Agenda and, in its negotiations on development reform, the General Assembly should consider how to make the most effective use of the operational activities segment, in particular whether it could serve as a forum to advance discussions on the proposed establishment of a joint executive board for the New York-based funds and programmes.

58. His delegation supported the proposed increase in inter-agency pooled funds and entity-specific thematic funds, provided that the related resources were primarily used to finance projects on the ground aimed at ensuring no one was left behind, rather than to cover the administrative costs of the funds themselves. The value of non-monetary contributions such as knowledge, expertise, best practices and support for capacity-building should also be considered.

59. **Mr. Poudel Chhetri** (Observer for Nepal) said that General Assembly resolution 71/243 contained valuable guidance for aligning the United Nations development system with the demands of the 2030 Agenda by strengthening the development pillar and enhancing the Organization's effectiveness, efficiency and coherence in supporting countries' efforts to fulfil their sustainable development needs. In line with the recommendations outlined in the Secretary-General's report on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 71/243 (A/73/63-E/2018/8), the United Nations development system should provide targeted support for vulnerable countries such as landlocked developing countries and small island developing States, which faced particular challenges in implementing Sustainable Development Goals 6, 7 and 9. Moreover, any changes to the resident coordinator system must take into account ongoing operational activities and ensure the system's improved functioning and effectiveness.

60. The proposed funding compact would ensure the predictability of funding, reduce overlaps and inter-agency competition over resources, and improve coordination. His delegation particularly supported the proposals to increase the share of core resources and improve the quality and flexibility of non-core resources, and highlighted the importance of aligning funding with the priorities of programme countries. Efforts to reposition the United Nations development system must address gaps, promote synergies and improve transparency and accountability, while avoiding the politicization of development issues.

61. **Mr. Mikayilli** (Azerbaijan) said that, as emphasized in the Secretary-General's reports on repositioning the United Nations development system, more than half of development budgets continued to be allocated to activities related to Sustainable Development Goals 1 to 5, which primarily represented the unfinished business of the Millennium Development Goals. It was therefore necessary to expedite reforms to make the Organization more strategic, transparent, efficient and results-focused in supporting countries' efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

62. The proposed reforms must focus on strengthening national ownership, including in preparing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating UNDAFs; on responding to national development needs; and on achieving results on the ground. Resident coordinators must work in close collaboration with Governments in an independent and impartial manner, and geographical

balance must be achieved in the related appointment process. In addition, special attention should be given to the needs of least developed countries, in particular small island developing States and landlocked developing countries, and to increasing the quantity and predictability of core resources in order to preserve the neutrality and multilateral nature of the United Nations development system.

63. **Mr. García Moritán** (Observer for Argentina) said that the Secretary-General's report (A/72/684-E/2018/7) contained concrete ideas for improving coordination on the ground and using resources more efficiently, including proposals to co-locate and merge the country offices of the United Nations information centres with resident coordinator offices, and to consolidate common business services and back-office functions at the country level. Earmarked contributions for development activities should be reduced and core resources proportionally increased. It was unclear how the merging of the executive boards of the funds and programmes would contribute to coherence, particularly as it might have a negative impact on those entities' mandates, reduce the availability of information on their work for consideration by Member States and undermine equitable geographical representation.

64. The proposals to improve the United Nations development system at the regional level should consider the specificities of each region, and attempts should not be made to reinvent the system's regional architecture without a prior evaluation aimed at preserving those elements that were functioning effectively. Moreover, given that the primary responsibility for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda lay with Member States, they should play a central role in evaluating the Organization's presence on the ground.

65. **Ms. O'Connor** (United Kingdom) said that, in order to ensure the accountability of the United Nations development system to the Governments and people it served, common objectives and coherent strategic priorities must be established in alignment with local needs; emphasis must be placed on achieving results; and optimal use must be made of available resources by realizing efficiencies, including by consolidating back-office functions. The accountability of the system to Member States must also be improved by strengthening the relationships between entities and their governing bodies; reducing fragmentation; ensuring that all entities in the system were held to the same standards and were truly committed to improvement and sharing best practices; and harmonizing methods of monitoring, collecting and using data. To that end, the proposed establishment of an independent, system-wide evaluation function and the enrolment of all United Nations entities in the International Aid Transparency Initiative, which would allow Governments to access information online regarding the Organization's activities and expenditures in-country, would be essential.

66. The proposed funding compact would be important for ensuring the accountability to investors of individual entities and the system as a whole, and could serve as a starting point for conversations about how to attract additional substantial investments from a wider range of sources in order to guarantee predictable funding.

67. Council members' agreement on many of the proposed reforms demonstrated the strong collective commitment to achieving the 2030 Agenda, and she hoped that the Secretary-General had already begun implementing those reforms that did not require the agreement of Member States.

68. **Mr. Decorte** (United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)) said that UN-Habitat was going through its own member States-led reform, in compliance with General Assembly resolution 72/226. The open-ended Working Group established pursuant to paragraph 6 of that resolution had just started its work and would be submitting a proposal on the reform of UN-Habitat by the end of June 2018. Moreover, the new Executive Director of UN-Habitat was strongly committed to a more transparent, accountable, efficient, effective and coherent United Nations development system.

69. Each United Nations agency had a specific mandate and expertise that must be used in an efficient and cost-effective manner to provide integrated support to countries, cities and communities. That was particularly important for such non-resident agencies as UN-Habitat.

70. Collaboration among United Nations programmes and entities was essential, and the proposed United Nations system-wide strategy on the implementation of the New Urban Agenda, the related elements of the 2030 Agenda, the Multi-Partner Implementation Facility for Sustainable Urban Development and the Joint Policy Fund to Advance the 2030 Agenda through Integrated Policy would all be important tools in ensuring coherence and having a greater impact at the country level.

71. UN-Habitat was committed to transforming itself into an outward-looking agency, maximizing its contribution to joint United Nations efforts and working

towards more evenly balanced partnerships with non-United Nations stakeholders.

72. The ninth session of the World Urban Forum had demonstrated the convening power of the United Nations by bringing together 22,000 participants, including more than 100 ministers and deputy ministers, from 165 countries, who had debated concrete implementation and partnership models to build cities for all, using the New Urban Agenda as a tool to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. That event could form the basis for future work.

73. **Ms. Jappie** (International Trade Centre (ITC)) said that, as a new member of the United Nations Development Group, ITC was fully committed to the repositioning of the United Nations and to supporting the Secretary-General's efforts to implement reform. The Strategic Plan 2018–2021 of ITC was fully aligned with the quadrennial comprehensive policy review, the results of its programme portfolio were linked to specific Sustainable Development Goals and its work was designed and implemented with partners from within and outside the United Nations development system.

74. As a joint agency of the United Nations and the World Trade Organization, ITC focused its efforts on helping micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises, including those owned by women and those in least developed countries, to be competitive on the international market. The economic dimension of sustainable development must be taken into account to achieve inclusive growth and the successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda. ITC made a set of tested methodologies available to resident coordinators and to the United Nations development system at large to support national and regional development activities. It also had long experience in supporting United Nations country teams in a flexible manner to deliver results at the national level, thanks to its good working arrangements with UNDP. ITC had been pleased to contribute to the reform process by sharing its experience in flexible, needs-based engagement at the country level.

75. Partnership was fundamental to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and to the working of the United Nations development system, and ITC worked with private companies, such as eBay and Bosch, on trade-led private sector development as part of its efforts to support specific enterprises. Equally important was its partnership with other entities involved in sustainable development, in particular its parent organizations the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and the World Trade Organization. ITC looked forward to an even closer working relationship with other United Nations entities involved in the economic dimension of sustainable development and to supporting efforts to reposition the United Nations development system.

76. **The President** invited the Council to take note of the report of the Secretary-General on repositioning the United Nations development system to deliver on the 2030 Agenda: ensuring a better future for all (A/72/124-E/2018/3); the report of the Secretary-General on repositioning the United Nations development system to deliver on the 2030 Agenda: our promise for dignity, prosperity and peace on a healthy planet (A/72/684-E/2018/7); the report of the Secretary-General on implementation of General Assembly resolution 71/243 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system, 2018 (A/73/63-E/2018/8); the report on the first and second regular sessions and annual session of 2017 of the Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund (E/2017/34/Rev.1); the report on the first and second regular sessions and annual session of 2017 of the Executive Board of the World Food Programme (E/2018/36); and the note by the Secretariat transmitting the reports of the Executive Board of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women on its first and second regular sessions and its annual session of 2017 (E/2018/65).

77. *It was so decided.*

**Closing of the segment**

78. **The Deputy Secretary-General** said that she was encouraged by Council members' agreement on critical aspects of the proposed reforms, which were the product of intensive consultations with Member States, United Nations entities, an expert reference group and other stakeholders. She appreciated the Council's guidance and support in crafting proposals that responded to the mandates emanating from the 2016 quadrennial comprehensive policy review and the 2030 Agenda and that demonstrated the collective commitment to achieving a more effective, cohesive and accountable United Nations development system.

79. **The President** said that Member States must translate words into action by agreeing on an ambitious set of measures to revitalize the United Nations development system in order to accelerate implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The constructive nature of the Council's deliberations during the current segment augured favourably for the success of the General Assembly's upcoming consultations on the

repositioning of the United Nations development system.

80. Several areas of agreement had emerged during the Council's deliberations. First, UNDAFs must provide comprehensive, results-based work plans for all United Nations entities and must be drafted in consultation with Governments in accordance with national priorities. Their implementation must also be underpinned by strengthened collaboration between United Nations country teams and non-resident agencies, including regional entities. The proposed role of UNDP as a support platform for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals needed to be clarified, and the gaps and overlaps in United Nations development system support to the achievement of the Goals identified in the Secretary-General's report (A/72/124-E/2018/3) must be addressed.

81. Second, resident coordinators must work in a more independent, cohesive, agile and results-oriented manner. Further clarification was also required regarding the proposal to strengthen the role of resident coordinators as central focal points for discussions with host Governments, while ensuring respect for existing reporting and accountability lines between United Nations entities and their governing bodies.

82. Third, a system-wide approach to partnerships must be developed and basic criteria formulated to determine the suitability of potential partners, such as alignment with the Organization's values and the ability to contribute meaningfully to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. In addition, there must be a clearer understanding of the envisaged role of resident coordinator offices as a one-stop shop for partnerships at the country level.

83. Fourth, a common focus on the 2030 Agenda was essential to the success of a system-wide approach to sustainable development, as exemplified by the system-wide strategic document prepared by UNDG in accordance with General Assembly resolution 71/243 and the common chapter in the strategic plans of four United Nations entities for 2018–2021. Moreover, existing lines of accountability should not hinder coherence at the country level.

84. Fifth, core funding for development activities, as well as the use of well-designed pooled funding mechanisms, should be increased to ensure predictability, efficiency, effectiveness, cohesiveness and a results-based approach. In that connection, Member States looked forward to the proposed funding dialogue.

85. Sixth, the accountability of the United Nations development system to Member States should be strengthened, and the review of the working methods of the executive boards of development system entities in accordance with General Assembly resolution 71/243 should continue. Further attention should also be given to the proposals to establish a system-wide evaluation function and to gradually merge the executive boards of the funds and programmes, bearing in mind the need to ensure the fiduciary accountability of individual agencies.

86. Lastly, the proposal to divide the operational activities for development segment into two annual sessions might also need to be discussed in the context of the review of the implementation of General Assembly resolution 61/16 on the strengthening of the Council under General Assembly resolution 68/1.

*The meeting rose at 4.50 p.m.*

United Nations E/2018/SR.15

# Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
11 April 2018

Original: English

**2018 session**
27 July 2017–26 July 2018

**Summary record of the 15th meeting**
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 4 April 2018, at 3 p.m.

*President*: Ms. Chatardova ..... (Czechia)

## Contents

Agenda item 2: Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters (*continued*)

Agenda item 4: Elections, nominations, confirmations and appointments (*continued*)

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18-05299 (E)

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*The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.*

**Agenda item 2: Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters** (*continued*)

*Draft decision E/2018/L.6: Theme for the humanitarian affairs segment of the 2018 session of the Economic and Social Council*

1. **The President** said that the draft decision contained no programme budget implications.

2. *Draft decision E/2018/L.6 was adopted.*

**Agenda item 4: Elections, nominations, confirmations and appointments** (*continued*)

*Commission on Population and Development*

3. **The President** invited the Council to consider an outstanding vacancy on the Commission on Population and Development. The Western European and Other States had endorsed the candidature of Luxembourg, for a term beginning on the date of election and expiring at the close of the Commission's fifty-fourth session in 2021. In the absence of any other nominations, she took it that the Council wished to elect Luxembourg by acclamation.

4. *Luxembourg was elected to the Commission on Population and Development by acclamation.*

5. **The President** said that she took it that the Council wished to further postpone the election of two members from the African States and one member from the Asia-Pacific States, for a term beginning at the first meeting of the Commission's fifty-second session and expiring at the close of the Commission's fifty-fifth session in 2022; and two members from the Asia-Pacific States, for a term beginning on the date of election and expiring at the close of the Commission's fifty-fourth session in 2021.

6. *It was so decided.*

*The meeting rose at 3.10 p.m.*

United Nations E/2018/SR.16

# Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
10 May 2018
English
Original: English

**2018 session**
27 July 2017–26 July 2018
First coordination and management meeting

**Summary record of the 16th meeting**
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 16 April 2018, at 3 p.m.

*President*: Ms. King (Vice-President).....(Saint Vincent and the Grenadines)

## Contents

Agenda item 4: Elections, nominations, confirmations and appointments (*continued*)

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18-06019 (E)

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*In the absence of Ms. Chatardova (Czechia), Ms. King (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

*The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.*

**Agenda item 4: Elections, nominations, confirmations and appointments** (*continued*)
(E/2018/9, E/2018/9/Add.3, E/2018/9/Add.4, E/2018/9/Add.5, E/2018/9/Add.5/Corr.1, E/2018/9/Add.6, E/2018/9/Add.6/Corr.1, E/2018/9/Add.7, E/2018/9/Add.8, E/2018/9/Add.9, E/2018/9/Add.10, E/2018/9/Add.11, E/2018/9/Add.12, E/2018/9/Add.13 and E/2018/9/Add.14)

1. **The President** drew the Council's attention to the list of candidates for election to subsidiary bodies, dated 16 April 2018, which had been circulated to delegations. The list included endorsed and non-endorsed candidates nominated by regional groups.

*Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations* (E/2018/9/Add.4)

2. **The President** invited the Council to elect 19 members to the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations for a four-year term beginning on 1 January 2019 and expiring on 31 December 2022. Since the number of candidates endorsed by the Group of African States, the Group of Eastern European States and the Group of Western European and Other States was equal to the number of vacancies to be filled from each group, she took it that the Council wished to elect by acclamation the candidates proposed.

3. *It was so decided.*

4. *Burundi, Estonia, Greece, Israel, Libya, Nigeria, the Russian Federation, the Sudan, Swaziland, Turkey and the United States of America were elected members of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations by acclamation.*

5. **The President** invited the Council to elect by secret ballot four members from Asia-Pacific States and four members from Latin American and Caribbean States.

6. *At the invitation of the President, Ms. Clará de Vassil (El Salvador) and Mr. Muhamedjanov (Tajikistan) acted as tellers.*

7. *A vote was taken by secret ballot.*

| | |
|---|---|
| *Asia-Pacific States* | |
| *Number of ballot papers*: | 54 |
| *Invalid ballots*: | 1 |
| *Number of valid ballots*: | 53 |
| *Number of members voting*: | 53 |
| *Required majority*: | 27 |
| *Number of votes obtained*: | |
| India | 46 |
| Pakistan | 43 |
| Bahrain | 40 |
| China | 39 |
| Iran (Islamic Republic of) | 27 |
| *Latin American and Caribbean States* | |
| *Number of ballot papers*: | 54 |
| *Invalid ballots*: | 1 |
| *Number of valid ballots*: | 53 |
| *Number of members voting*: | 53 |
| *Required majority*: | 27 |
| *Number of votes obtained*: | |
| Cuba | 44 |
| Mexico | 43 |
| Nicaragua | 42 |
| Brazil | 38 |
| Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) | 24 |

8. *Having obtained the required majority, Bahrain, Brazil, China, Cuba, India, Mexico, Nicaragua and Pakistan were elected members of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations.*

*Commission on Population and Development* (E/2018/9)

9. **The President** invited the Council to elect eight members to the Commission on Population and Development for a four-year term beginning at the first meeting of the Commission's fifty-third session in 2019 and expiring at the close of the Commission's fifty-sixth session in 2023. Since the number of candidates from each regional group was equal to or less than the number of vacancies to be filled from those groups, she took it that the Council wished to elect by acclamation the candidates proposed.

10. *It was so decided.*

11. *Belarus, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Malaysia and Togo were elected members of the Commission on Population and Development by acclamation.*

12. **The President** said that, in the absence of any other candidates for election to the Commission on Population and Development, she took it that the Council wished to postpone the election of two members from Latin American and Caribbean States and one member from Western European and other States for a four-year term beginning at the first meeting of the Commission's fifty-third session in 2019 and expiring at the close of the Commission's fifty-sixth session in 2023.

13. *It was so decided.*

14. **The President** recalled that there were outstanding vacancies on the Commission on Population and Development to be filled by candidates from African States and Asia-Pacific States. Since the number of candidates from each regional group was less than or equal to the number of vacancies to be filled from those groups, she took it that the Council wished to elect by acclamation the candidates proposed.

15. *It was so decided.*

16. *Côte d'Ivoire and India were elected members of the Commission on Population and Development.*

17. **The President** said she took it that the Council wished to further postpone the elections for three outstanding vacancies on the Commission for Population and Development: one to be filled from Asia-Pacific States for a term beginning on the date of election and expiring at the close of the Commission's fifty-fourth session in 2021; and one to be filled from African States and one from Asia-Pacific States for a term beginning on the date of election and expiring at the close of the Commission's fifty-fifth session in 2022.

18. *It was so decided.*

*Commission for Social Development* (E/2018/9)

19. **The President** invited the Council to elect 14 members to the Commission for Social Development for a four-year term beginning at the first meeting of the Commission's fifty-eighth session in 2019 and expiring at the close of the Commission's sixty-first session in 2023. Since the number of candidates from each regional group was equal to or less than the number of vacancies to be filled from those groups, she took it that the Council wished to elect by acclamation the candidates proposed.

20. *It was so decided.*

21. *Argentina, Chad, Colombia, Guatemala, Iraq, Israel, Morocco, Sierra Leone and South Africa were elected members of the Commission for Social Development by acclamation.*

22. **The President** said that, in the absence of any other candidates for election to the Commission for Social Development, she took it that the Council wished to postpone the election of two members from Asia-Pacific States, one member from Eastern European States and two members from Western European and other States for a four-year term beginning at the first meeting of the Commission's fifty-eighth session in 2019 and expiring at the close of the Commission's sixty-first session in 2023.

23. *It was so decided.*

24. **The President** recalled that there were outstanding vacancies on the Commission for Social Development to be filled by candidates from Asia-Pacific States. India and Kuwait had been endorsed by the Group of Asia-Pacific States for a term beginning on the date of election and expiring at the close of the Commission's fifty-ninth session in 2021. She took it that the Council wished to elect by acclamation the candidates proposed.

25. *It was so decided.*

26. *India and Kuwait were elected members of the Commission for Social Development by acclamation.*

27. **The President** said she took it that the Council wished to further postpone the elections for three outstanding vacancies on the Commission for Social Development to be filled from Western European and other States, one for a term beginning on the date of election and expiring at the close of the Commission's fifty-eighth session in 2020 and two for a term beginning on the date of election and expiring at the close of the Commission's fifty-ninth session in 2021.

28. *It was so decided.*

*Commission on the Status of Women* (E/2018/9)

29. **The President** invited the Council to elect 11 members to the Commission on the Status of Women for a four-year term beginning at the first meeting of the Commission's sixty-fourth session in 2019 and expiring at the close of the Commission's sixty-seventh session in 2023. Since the number of candidates from each regional group was equal to the number of vacancies to be filled from those groups, she took it that the Council wished to elect by acclamation the candidates proposed.

30. *It was so decided.*

31. *Armenia, Australia, Bangladesh, Belarus, Cuba, Equatorial Guinea, Germany, Malaysia, South Africa, Togo and the United States of America were elected members of the Commission on the Status of Women by acclamation.*

32. **The President** said that the membership of the Commission on the Status of Women was complete.

*Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice* (E/2018/9)

33. **The President** invited the Council to elect 20 members to the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice for a three-year term beginning on 1 January 2019 and expiring on 31 December 2021.

34. **Ms. Herity** (Secretary of the Council) said that Algeria had been endorsed by the Group of African States.

35. **The President** said that, since the number of candidates from each regional group was equal to or less than the number of vacancies to be filled from those groups, she took it that the Council wished to elect by acclamation the candidates proposed.

36. *It was so decided.*

37. *Algeria, Austria, Belarus, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Cuba, France, India, Iraq, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Kuwait, Mexico, Nigeria, Swaziland, Thailand, Turkey and the United States of America were elected members of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice by acclamation.*

38. **The President** said that, in the absence of any other candidates for election to the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, she took it that the Council wished to postpone the election of one member from Eastern European States and two members from Latin American and Caribbean States for a three-year term beginning on 1 January 2019 and expiring on 31 December 2021.

39. *It was so decided.*

40. **The President** recalled that there were outstanding vacancies on the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice to be filled from African States. Eritrea had been endorsed by the Group of African States for a term beginning on the date of election and expiring on 31 December 2020. She took it that the Council wished to elect by acclamation the candidate proposed.

41. *It was so decided.*

42. *Eritrea was elected a member of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice by acclamation.*

43. **The President** said she took it that the Council wished to further postpone the election for another outstanding vacancy on the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, to be filled from African States for a term beginning on the date of election and expiring on 31 December 2020.

44. *It was so decided.*

*Commission on Science and Technology for Development* (E/2018/9)

45. **The President** said that Hungary had resigned from the Commission on Science and Technology for Development with effect from 31 December 2018. The Group of Eastern European States had endorsed Serbia to complete the term of office expiring on 31 December 2020. She took it that the Council wished to elect Serbia by acclamation.

46. *It was so decided.*

47. *Serbia was elected a member of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development by acclamation.*

48. **The President** invited the Council to elect 23 members to the Commission on Science and Technology for Development for a four-year term beginning on 1 January 2019 and expiring on 31 December 2022. Since the number of candidates from African States, Eastern European States, Latin American and Caribbean States and Western European and other States was equal to or less than the number of vacancies to be filled from each of those groups, she took it that the Council wished to elect by acclamation the candidates proposed.

49. *Belgium, Botswana, Canada, Cuba, Egypt, Ethiopia, Hungary, Kenya, Latvia, Liberia, Romania, the United Kingdom and the United States of America were elected members of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development by acclamation.*

50. **The President** said that a request had been made in accordance with rule 68 of the Council's rules of procedure to conduct by secret ballot the election for the vacancies to be filled from Asia-Pacific States.

51. **Mr. Yao** Shaojun (China) asked which State had requested the secret ballot.

52. **The President** said that the United States had requested the secret ballot.

53. *At the invitation of the President, Ms. Clará de Vassil (El Salvador) and Mr. Fintakpa Lamega (Togo) acted as tellers.*

54. *A vote was taken by secret ballot.*

| | |
|---|---|
| *Number of ballot papers*: | 53 |
| *Number of valid ballots*: | 53 |
| *Number of members voting*: | 53 |
| *Required majority*: | 27 |
| Thailand | 53 |
| Nepal | 52 |
| China | 51 |

| | |
|---|---|
| Iran (Islamic Republic of) | 49 |
| Republic of Korea | 1 |

55. *Having obtained the required majority, China, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Nepal and Thailand were elected members of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development.*

56. **The President** said that, in the absence of any other candidates for election to the Commission on Science and Technology for Development, she took it that the Council wished to postpone the election of one member from African States, one member from Asia-Pacific States, three members from Latin American and Caribbean States and one member from Western European and other States for a four-year term beginning on 1 January 2019 and expiring on 31 December 2022.

57. *It was so decided.*

58. **The President** recalled that there was an outstanding vacancy on the Commission to be filled from Western European and other States for a term beginning on the date of election and expiring on 31 December 2020. She took it that the Council wished to elect by acclamation the candidate proposed.

59. *It was so decided.*

60. *Finland was elected a member of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development by acclamation.*

*Committee for Programme and Coordination* (E/2018/9/Add.3)

61. **The President** invited the Council to nominate seven members for election by the General Assembly to the Committee for Programme and Coordination for a three-year term beginning on 1 January 2019 and expiring on 31 December 2021. Since the number of candidates from each regional group was equal to or less than the number of vacancies to be filled from those groups, she took it that the Council wished to nominate the candidates proposed.

62. *It was so decided.*

63. *Angola, Argentina, Ethiopia, France and the Russian Federation were nominated for election by the General Assembly to the Committee for Programme and Coordination.*

64. **The President** said that, in the absence of any other candidates, she took it that the Council wished to postpone the nomination of one member from Latin American and Caribbean States and one member from Western European and other States for election by the General Assembly to the Committee for Programme and Coordination for a three-year term beginning on 1 January 2019 and expiring on 31 December 2021.

65. *It was so decided.*

66. **The President** recalled that there were outstanding vacancies on the Committee to be filled by candidates from African States and Western European and other States for a term beginning on the date of election and expiring on 31 December 2020.

67. **Ms. Herity** (Secretary of the Council) said that Chad had been endorsed by the Group of African States for a term beginning on the date of election and expiring on 31 December 2020.

68. **The President** said that, since the number of candidates from each regional group was equal to or less than the number of vacancies to be filled from those groups, she took it that the Council wished to nominate the candidates proposed.

69. *It was so decided.*

70. *Chad and Italy were nominated for election by the General Assembly to the Committee for Programme and Coordination by acclamation.*

71. **The President** recalled that there was one outstanding vacancy on the Committee for Programme and Coordination to be filled by a candidate from Western European and other States for a term beginning on the date of election and expiring on 31 December 2018 and one to be filled by a candidate from Latin American and Caribbean States for a term beginning on the date of election and expiring on 31 December 2020.

*Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* (E/2018/9/Add.5, E/2018/9/Add.5/Corr.1, E/2018/9/Add.6 and E/2018/9/Add.6/Corr.1)

72. **The President** invited the Council to elect nine members to the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights for a four-year term beginning on 1 January 2019 and expiring on 31 December 2022. Since the number of candidates from Asia-Pacific States, Eastern European States, Latin American and Caribbean States and Western European and other States was equal to or less than the number of vacancies, she took it that the Council wished to elect by acclamation the candidates proposed.

73. *Mr. Abashidze (Russian Federation), Mr. De Schutter (Belgium), Ms. Shin (Republic of Korea), Mr. Uprimny Yepes (Colombia) and Mr. Zerbini Ribeiro Leão (Brazil) were elected members of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights by acclamation.*

74. **The President** invited the Council to elect by secret ballot two members from African States.

75. *At the invitation of the President, Mr. Torbergsen (Norway) and Mr. Muhamedjanov (Tajikistan) acted as tellers.*

76. *A vote was taken by secret ballot.*

| | |
|---|---|
| *Number of ballot papers*: | 54 |
| *Number of valid ballots*: | 54 |
| *Number of members voting*: | 54 |
| *Required majority*: | 28 |
| *Number of votes obtained*: | |
| Mr. Emuze (Nigeria) | 29 |
| Mr. Caunhye (Mauritius) | 25 |
| Mr. Kerdoun (Algeria) | 25 |
| Ms. Seyni (Niger) | 13 |
| Ms. Namusobya (Uganda) | 11 |
| Mr. Kurdi (Sudan) | 3 |

77. *Having obtained the required majority, Mr. Emuze (Nigeria) was elected a member of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.*

78. *Two candidates having received an equal number of votes, a second vote was taken by secret ballot.*

79. *At the invitation of the President, Mr. Torbergsen (Norway) and Mr. Muhamedjanov (Tajikistan) acted as tellers.*

80. *A vote was taken by secret ballot.*

| | |
|---|---|
| *Number of ballot papers*: | 54 |
| *Number of valid ballots*: | 54 |
| *Abstentions*: | 1 |
| *Number of members voting*: | 53 |
| *Required majority*: | 27 |
| *Number of votes obtained*: | |
| Mr. Caunhye (Mauritius) | 29 |
| Mr. Kerdoun (Algeria) | 24 |

81. *Having obtained the required majority, Mr. Caunhye (Mauritius) was elected a member of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.*

82. **The President** said that, in the absence of any other candidates for the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, she took it that the Council wished to postpone the election of one member from Asia-Pacific States and one member from Latin American and Caribbean States for a four-year term beginning on 1 January 2019 and expiring on 31 December 2022.

83. *It was so decided.*

*Intergovernmental Working Group of Experts on International Standards of Accounting and Reporting* (E/2018/9/Add.7)

84. **The President** invited the Council to elect 13 members to the Intergovernmental Working Group of Experts on International Standards of Accounting and Reporting for a three-year term beginning on 1 January 2019 and expiring on 31 December 2021. Since the number of candidates from each regional group was equal to or less than the number of vacancies to be filled from those groups, she took it that the Council wished to elect by acclamation the candidates proposed.

85. *Albania, Belarus, Brazil, Colombia, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Nigeria and the Philippines were elected members of the Intergovernmental Working Group of Experts on International Standards of Accounting and Reporting by acclamation.*

86. **The President** said that, in the absence of any other candidates for election to the Intergovernmental Working Group of Experts on International Standards of Accounting and Reporting, she took it that the Council wished to postpone the election of two members from African States, one member from Asia-Pacific States and one member from Latin American and Caribbean States for a three-year term beginning on 1 January 2019 and expiring on 31 December 2021.

87. *It was so decided.*

88. **The President** recalled that there were outstanding vacancies on the Working Group. In the absence of any other nominations, she took it that the Council wished to elect, by acclamation, Botswana, Cameroon, China, South Africa and the United Kingdom for a term beginning on the date of election and expiring on 31 December 2020.

89. *It was so decided.*

90. *Botswana, Cameroon, China, South Africa and the United Kingdom were elected members of the Intergovernmental Working Group of Experts on International Standards of Accounting and Reporting by acclamation.*

91. **The President**, urging the regional groups concerned to submit nominees to fill vacancies at the earliest opportunity, said that, in the absence of any other candidates for election to the Intergovernmental Working Group of Experts on International Standards of Accounting and Reporting, she took it that the Council agreed to further postpone the election of two members from Asia-Pacific States and one member from Latin American and Caribbean States for a term beginning on the date of election and expiring on 31 December 2018;

and of one member from African States, two members from Asia-Pacific States, three members from Latin American and Caribbean States and seven members from Western European and other States for a term beginning on the date of election and expiring on 31 December 2020.

92. *It was so decided.*

*Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund* (E/2018/9/Add.8)

93. **The President** invited the Council to elect 14 members to the Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund for a three-year term beginning on 1 January 2019 and expiring on 31 December 2021. Since the number of candidates from each regional group was equal to the number of vacancies to be filled from those groups, she took it that the Council wished to elect by acclamation the candidates proposed.

94. *It was so decided.*

95. *Australia, Bangladesh, Benin, Burundi, Cameroon, Canada, Djibouti, France, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco and Pakistan were elected members of the Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund by acclamation.*

96. **The President** said that Germany, Greece, Iceland and Norway had resigned from the Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund with effect from 31 December 2018. The Group of Western European and Other States had endorsed Portugal and Switzerland to complete the terms of office of Germany and Norway, respectively, expiring on 31 December 2019, and Denmark and Sweden to complete the terms of office of Greece and Iceland, respectively, expiring on 31 December 2020. She took it that the Council wished to elect by acclamation the candidates proposed.

97. *It was so decided.*

98. *Denmark, Portugal, Sweden and Switzerland were elected members of the Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund by acclamation.*

*Executive Committee of the Programme of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees*

99. **The President** drew the Council's attention to General Assembly resolution 72/151, in which the Assembly had decided to increase the number of members of the Executive Committee of the Programme of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees from 101 States to 102 and requested the Council to elect the additional member. She took it that the Council wished to elect by acclamation the candidate proposed.

100. *It was so decided.*

101. *Zimbabwe was elected a member of the Executive Committee of the Programme of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees by acclamation.*

*Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme/United Nations Population Fund/United Nations Office for Project Services* (E/2018/9/Add.9)

102. **The President** invited the Council to elect 14 members to the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme/United Nations Population Fund/United Nations Office for Project Services for a three-year term beginning on 1 January 2019 and expiring on 31 December 2021. Since the number of candidates from each regional group was equal to the number of vacancies to be filled from those groups, she took it that the Council wished to elect by acclamation the candidates proposed.

103. *It was so decided.*

104. *Belgium, Botswana, Cameroon, Canada, the Gambia, India, Italy, Mexico, the Netherlands, the Republic of Korea, Rwanda, South Africa, Ukraine and Vanuatu were elected members of the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme/United Nations Population Fund/United Nations Office of Project Services by acclamation.*

105. **The President** said that Finland, Luxembourg, Portugal and Switzerland had resigned from the Executive Board with effect from 31 December 2018. The Group of Western European and Other States had endorsed Turkey to complete the term of Luxembourg expiring on 31 December 2019, and Australia, Sweden and Monaco to complete the terms of Finland, Portugal and Switzerland, respectively, expiring on 31 December 2020. She took it that the Council wished to elect by acclamation the candidates proposed.

106. *It was so decided.*

107. *Australia, Monaco, Sweden and Turkey were elected members of the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme/United Nations Population Fund/United Nations Office of Project Services by acclamation.*

*Executive Board of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women* (E/2018/9/Add.10)

108. **The President** said that, in connection with paragraph 61 (b) of General Assembly resolution 64/289, Turkey and Chile had resigned from the

Executive Board of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women with effect from 31 December 2018. Israel had been nominated to complete the term of Turkey expiring on 31 December 2019. She took it that the Council wished to elect by acclamation the candidate proposed.

109. *It was so decided.*

110. *Israel was elected a member of the Executive Board of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women by acclamation.*

111. **The President** said that, in the absence of any other candidates for election to the Executive Board, she took it that the Council wished to postpone the election of one member from the contributing countries selected by the Council in accordance with paragraph 61 (b) of General Assembly resolution 64/289, to complete the term expiring on 31 December 2019.

112. *It was so decided.*

113. **The President** invited the Council to elect 17 members of the Executive Board of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, pursuant to Council resolution 2010/35, for a three-year term beginning on 1 January 2019 and expiring on 31 December 2021.

114. **Ms. Herity** (Secretary of the Council) said that Equatorial Guinea had been endorsed by the Group of African States.

115. **The President** said that, since the number of candidates from each regional group was equal to or less than the number of vacancies to be filled from those groups, she took it that the Council wished to elect by acclamation the candidates proposed.

116. *It was so decided.*

117. *Angola, Bangladesh, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Equatorial Guinea, Ghana, Georgia, Hungary, India, Ireland, Kenya, Mongolia, Morocco, Nepal, Saudi Arabia and Turkey were elected members of the Executive Board of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women by acclamation.*

118. **The President** said that the membership of the Executive Board of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women was complete. However, Canada and the Netherlands, which were members of the Executive Board under the regional category, had resigned with effect from 31 December 2018. Australia and Sweden had been endorsed by the Group of Western European and Other States to complete the terms of Canada and the Netherlands, respectively, expiring on 31 December 2019. She took it that the Council wished to elect by acclamation the candidates proposed.

119. *It was so decided.*

120. *Australia and Sweden were elected members of the Executive Board of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women by acclamation.*

*Executive Board of the World Food Programme* (E/2018/9/Add.11)

121. **The President** invited the Council to elect six members to the Executive Board of the World Food Programme for a three-year term beginning on 1 January 2019 and expiring on 31 December 2021. Since the number of candidates from Lists A, B, D and E was equal to the number of vacancies to be filled from each list, she took it that the Council wished to elect by acclamation the candidates proposed.

122. *It was so decided.*

123. *Burkina Faso, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation, Sweden and Switzerland were elected members of the Executive Board of the World Food Programme by acclamation.*

124. **The President** said that the membership of the Executive Board of the World Food Programme was complete. However, Greece and Norway had resigned from the Executive Board with effect from 31 December 2018. Luxembourg and Spain had been endorsed by the countries of List D to complete the terms of Norway and Greece respectively, expiring on 31 December 2019. She took it that the Council wished to elect by acclamation the candidates proposed.

125. *It was so decided.*

126. *Luxembourg and Spain were elected members of the Executive Board of the World Food Programme by acclamation.*

*Committee for the United Nations Population Award* (E/2018/9/Add.12)

127. **The President**, urging all regional groups to submit nominees to fill vacancies at the earliest opportunity, said that, in the absence of any candidates for election to the Committee for the United Nations Population Award, she took it that the Council agreed to postpone the election of three members from African States, three members from Asia-Pacific States, one member from Eastern European States, two members from Latin American and Caribbean States and one

member from Western European and other States, for a three-year term beginning on 1 January 2019.

128. *It was so decided.*

*Programme Coordinating Board of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS* (E/2018/9/Add.13)

129. **The President** invited the Council to elect nine members to the Programme Coordinating Board of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS for a three-year term beginning on 1 January 2019 and expiring on 31 December 2021. Since the number of candidates from each regional group was equal to the number of vacancies to be filled from those groups, she took it that the Council wished to elect by acclamation the candidates proposed.

130. *It was so decided.*

131. *Belgium, Brazil, China, Japan, Liberia, Namibia, the Russian Federation, Sweden and the United Kingdom were elected members of the Programme Coordinating Board of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS by acclamation.*

132. **The President** said that the membership of the Programme Coordinating Board of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS was complete.

*Governing Council of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme* (E/2018/9/Add.14)

133. **The President** invited the Council to elect 20 members to the Governing Council of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme for a four-year term beginning on 1 January 2019 and expiring on 31 December 2022.

134. **Ms. Herity** (Secretary of the Council) said that the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Sierra Leone had been endorsed by the Group of African States.

135. **The President** said that, since the number of candidates from each regional group was equal to or less than the number of vacancies to be filled from each of those groups, she took it that the Council wished to elect by acclamation the candidates proposed.

136. *It was so decided.*

137. *Argentina, Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Japan, Kazakhstan, Liberia, Mauritania, Poland, the Russian Federation, Sierra Leone and Zambia were elected members of the Governing Council of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme by acclamation.*

138. **The President** said that, in the absence of any other candidates for election to the Governing Council of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, she took it that the Economic and Social Council wished to postpone the election of three members from Latin American and Caribbean States and four members from Western European and other States for a three-year term beginning on 1 January 2019.

139. *It was so decided.*

140. **The President** recalled that there were outstanding vacancies on the Governing Council of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme to be filled by candidates from Latin American and Caribbean States, for a term beginning on the date of election and expiring on 31 December 2020, and, from Western European and other States, two for a term beginning on the date of election and expiring on 31 December 2018, one for a term beginning on the date of election and expiring on 31 December 2019 and one for a term beginning on the date of election and expiring on 31 December 2020. She took it that the Council wished to further postpone those outstanding vacancies.

141. *It was so decided.*

*Election of seven members of the Council to the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission*

142. **The President** said that the election of seven members of the Council to the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission would be held later in 2018.

*Statistical Commission*

143. **The President** recalled that there was an outstanding vacancy on the Statistical Commission to be filled by a candidate from African States for a term beginning on the date of election and expiring on 31 December 2021. She took it that the Council wished to elect by acclamation the candidate proposed.

144. *It was so decided.*

145. *Equatorial Guinea was elected a member of the Statistical Commission by acclamation.*

146. **The President** said that the membership of the Statistical Commission was complete.

*The meeting rose at 5.25 p.m.*

United Nations E/2018/SR.17

# Economic and Social Council

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**2018 session**
27 July 2017–26 July 2018
First coordination and management meeting

**Summary record of the 17th meeting**
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 17 April 2018, at 10 a.m.

*President:* Ms. King (Vice-President) ..... (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines)

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*In the absence of Ms. Chatardova (Czechia), Ms. King (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

*The meeting was called to order at 10.12 a.m.*

**Agenda item 17: Non-governmental organizations**
(E/2018/32 (Part I), E/2018/L.8, E/2018/L.9 and E/2018/L.10)

1. **Ms. Tsvetanova** (Observer for Bulgaria), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its member States; the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro, and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; the stabilization and association process country Bosnia and Herzegovina; the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, said that the European Union attached great importance to the fairness and effectiveness of the work of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations. In a world increasingly hostile to non-governmental organizations (NGOs), it was incumbent upon the United Nations to facilitate their access to and participation in its work. In that connection, the European Union and its member States welcomed the steps that would be taken to improve the Committee's functioning and receptivity to civil society. However, while careful review of applications for accreditation was expected, all legitimate applicants should receive fair and reasonable treatment, should only have to answer questions that were properly motivated and were in line with the letter and spirit of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31, and should be granted accreditation in a timely fashion. Should the Committee fail to take that approach, States members of the European Union reserved the right to bring the matter before the Council. With that in mind, she expressed support for the accreditation of US Committee for Human Rights in North Korea and Iran Human Rights Documentation Center, as proposed in E/2018/L.8 and E/2018/L.9, respectively, following the repeated deferral of their applications by the NGO Committee.

*Draft decision E/2018/L.8: Application of the non-governmental organization US Committee for Human Rights in North Korea for consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

2. **Ms. Eckels-Currie** (United States of America), introducing draft decision E/2018/L.8, said that US Committee for Human Rights in North Korea was a leading non-governmental organization (NGO) in the field of human rights research and advocacy and a source of information and analysis for United Nations offices and agencies. Her Government fully supported granting special consultative status to the NGO, which clearly met the eligibility criteria outlined in Council resolution 1996/31.

3. The role of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations was to give civil society a voice at the United Nations, as engagement with civil society benefited the Organization and all Member States, including through information received about the reality on the ground. Unfortunately, the Committee had too often fallen short of its responsibility, hindering the participation of organizations whose international credibility was well established; that was cause for concern whenever it occurred.

4. US Committee for Human Rights in North Korea played a leading role in promoting human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. It had published more than 30 reports on the status of North Korean compliance with international human rights obligations, including those reflected in United Nations treaties, and its objectivity and impartiality were widely recognized. Since 2016, however, the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations had blocked its application by means of repetitive questioning and unreasonable requests for detailed information about its work and funding. Some Committee members were abusing the due diligence process, going beyond reasonable enquiry in order to delay action indefinitely.

5. As US Committee for Human Rights in North Korea was a reputable NGO that clearly met the criteria for consultative status, the United States and other sponsors of the draft decision wondered whether NGO Committee decisions to defer its application were made for reasons other than merit. Constantly deferring a decision on an NGO that clearly met the criteria for consultative status had led numerous civil rights activists to raise concerns about the Committee's decision-making process. While some NGOs worked on issues that were controversial to some Governments, attempting to silence their voices ran counter to the founding principles of the United Nations. The adoption of the draft decision would clearly illustrate the importance that the Council placed on civil society participation.

6. **Ms. Herity** (Secretary of the Council) announced that Andorra, Belgium, Croatia, Czechia, France, Iceland, Ireland, Latvia, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania and Turkey had informed the Council secretariat prior to the meeting that they wished to join the sponsors of the draft decision. She then noted that Austria, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Finland, Italy, Norway, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden also wished to become sponsors.

7. **The President** said that the delegations of China and the Russian Federation had requested a recorded vote on the draft decision.

8. **Mr. Ri** Song Chol (Observer for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea), in a general statement, said that his delegation categorically rejected the draft decision. While many NGOs played an important role in various sectors and participated in the activities of the United Nations, those that sought consultative status should engage in activities that were in line with the Charter of the United Nations and the provisions of resolution 1996/31, and not politically motivated and aimed against a Member State. At four meetings held between May 2016 and February 2018, the Committee had posed similar questions to NGOs seeking consultative status. At the last of those meetings, the application of US Committee for Human Rights in North Korea had been rejected by a vote, held at the request of the United States, probably because of the notorious politicized aims and activities of the NGO.

9. The NGO, which had never visited the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, systematically misrepresented the human rights situation in his country. It violated the sovereignty of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, interfering in its internal affairs through manipulation and dissemination of fake data and reports, and carried out the hostile policy of the United States with funding from its Government. The fake "human rights" NGO had never broached the subject of the suffering imposed on the Korean people by the United States through national division, military threats and sanctions, and its hidden objective was clearly to overthrow the social system and Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The questions asked by the Committee had been legitimate and the rude behaviour of the United States made it unfit to be a Committee member. The attempt to overrule the previous decision of the Committee was a flagrant challenge to the Charter and to resolution 1996/31. Granting consultative status to a United States human rights plot agency disguised as an NGO would infringe upon universally recognized principles of opposing selectivity, politicization and double standards, and encourage the United States to persevere in its continuous violations of developing countries' sovereignty.

10. **Mr. Shulgin** (Russian Federation), speaking in explanation of vote before the voting, said that the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations painstakingly reviewed applications submitted by non-governmental organizations seeking consultative status with the Council, including their projects, organizational structure and budgets, before making its recommendations. The Committee members therefore had a fuller understanding of the workings of those organizations than most members of the Council, which did not have the time or the facts necessary to make well-reasoned decisions with respect to those applications on its own.

11. At its regular session in January, the Committee had decided that consultative status should not be granted to either US Committee for Human Rights in North Korea or Iran Human Rights Documentation Center. Although all applications had been subject to the same review procedure, the United States had called for a vote to grant consultative status specifically to those two organizations, thereby confirming the suspicions harboured by some Committee members that the two organizations had close financial ties to Government authorities and were engaged in overt politically motivated actions that targeted the foreign Governments in question, in violation of the Charter of the United Nations and paragraph 13 of Council resolution 1996/31. Following the conclusion of the Committee's session, a smear campaign had been launched to discredit the Committee's decision as having been politically motivated and adversarial.

12. The Committee conducted an even-handed, expert assessment of all applications it received in line with paragraph 8 of Council resolution 1996/31, which affirmed the inviolable right of States to obtain information of interest to them from the organizations applying for consultative status with the Council. All attempts to pressure the Committee to do otherwise were unacceptable. There was also no justification for revisiting its decisions. Furthermore, by second-guessing the Committee's recommendations, the Council would effectively discredit the Committee's work. The Russian Federation would therefore vote against the draft decisions to grant consultative status to US Committee for Human Rights in North Korea and Iran Human Rights Documentation Center.

13. **Ms. Andreyeva** (United Kingdom), in a general statement, said that civil society organizations had an important role to play in the United Nations and at all local and national levels of policymaking. The mandate of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations was to review applications for consultative status against the criteria laid out in resolution 1996/31, guided by the principles of non-discrimination, equality, participation, transparency and accountability, and to facilitate access to such status for NGOs that met those criteria. Its role was not to defer applications indefinitely, as had been the case for US Committee for Human Rights in North Korea and Iran Human Rights Documentation Center. Those reputable NGOs provided

expertise, insight and input to the United Nations on the human rights situation in countries that were the subject of General Assembly resolutions every year. They were exactly the kinds of NGOs from which the United Nations should welcome increased participation.

14. The United Kingdom remained concerned about repeated discrimination against NGOs with a human rights focus. Respecting human rights was essential to building secure, prosperous and resilient societies. It hoped that all newly elected and returning members of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations would ensure that NGOs granted consultative status represented the full range of issues of concern to the Council and the United Nations. Clearly, that included the fundamental pillar of human rights.

15. **Mr. Montwedi** (South Africa), speaking in explanation of vote before the voting, said that it was regrettable that the recommendations of the Committee should be reopened for discussion once again. The Committee exercised its mandate with due diligence and did not discriminate. The NGO in question was one of hundreds whose applications had been deferred pending answers to pertinent and legitimate questions, and it was not clear why it was being treated differently. There was a growing tendency by some members of the Committee to resort to unnecessary voting while answers to legitimate questions were still pending, which amounted to coercion of the Committee and compromised its work. His delegation had previously voted against the accreditation of the NGO and would do so in the vote about to be taken.

16. *A recorded vote was taken on draft decision* E/2018/L.8.

*In favour*:

Afghanistan, Andorra, Belgium, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Czechia, Denmark, France, Germany, Ghana, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Morocco, Norway, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Spain, Togo, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay.

*Against*:

Belarus, China, Russian Federation, South Africa, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam.

*Abstaining*:

Algeria, Azerbaijan, Benin, Chad, Ecuador, El Salvador, India, Lebanon, Peru, Rwanda, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Sudan, Tajikistan.

17. *Draft decision* E/2018/L.8 *was adopted by 29 votes to 6, with 13 abstentions.*

18. **Ms. González Tolosa** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) said that her country supported the participation of civil society and grass-roots organizations in the work of the United Nations, provided such participation was in line with resolution 1996/31. In its review of applications for consultative status, every member of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations had the responsibility and prerogative to ask questions to assess whether applicants met the criteria laid out in the resolution. At the Committee's meeting in February, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela had voted against granting consultative status to US Committee for Human Rights in North Korea in recognition of the right of members to ask such questions, and it had not altered its position. The practice of submitting draft decisions to reopen certain issues and to ignore the previous work of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations set a negative precedent with respect to how the Council dealt with matters entrusted to its subsidiary bodies, and weakened the role of the Committee.

*Draft decision E/2018/L.9: Application of the non-governmental organization Iran Human Rights Documentation Center for consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

19. **The President** said that the draft decision had no programme budget implications.

20. **Ms. Blais** (Canada), introducing the draft decision, said that Iran Human Rights Documentation Center was a highly credible NGO, whose work was directly relevant to that of the Council and the United Nations.

21. Her delegation fully supported the rules and procedures of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations, pursuant to resolution 1996/31, and recognized that consultative status was usually granted on the recommendation of the Committee. However, in recent years, some NGOs, particularly those working on human rights issues, had been subjected to excessive and repetitive questioning by the Committee. The rules and procedures were thus being misused for political purposes to prevent NGOs from gaining consultative status. Since its application for consultative status in 2010, Iran Human Rights Documentation Center had been asked nearly 70 questions, all of which it had answered fully and transparently, in good faith. The Center was independent and non-partisan, and its mission was to establish a historical record of the human rights situation in the Islamic Republic of Iran. It was known for its objective, fact-based reporting, and it clearly met the criteria set out in resolution 1996/31.

22. While not everyone might agree with the reports or statements issued by different NGOs, civil society had an important role to play; the rules and procedures should not be used to silence debate or shield countries from scrutiny of their human rights records. Resolution 1996/31 made clear that, although the Committee could make recommendations, the Council alone had the power to grant consultative status to an organization. The members of the Council should therefore exercise that authority and grant consultative status to a highly qualified NGO.

23. **Ms. Herity** (Secretary of the Council) announced that Andorra, Belgium, Croatia, Czechia, France, Iceland, Ireland, Latvia, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Poland and Romania had informed the Council secretariat prior to the meeting that they wished to join the sponsors. She then noted that Austria, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Finland, Italy, Norway, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden also wished to become sponsors.

24. **Ms. Eckels-Currie** (United States of America), in a general statement, said it was regrettable that a vote had been called regarding an organization that so clearly met the criteria for consultative status. Iran Human Rights Documentation Center was a reputable NGO that could contribute actively to the work of the United Nations, given that the General Assembly adopted resolutions every year condemning the human rights situation in Iran, and the mandate of the Special Rapporteur was renewed annually by the Human Rights Council. The fact that Iran refused to allow the Special Rapporteur access to the country made the organization's work particularly relevant.

25. In determining whether to grant NGOs consultative status, Council members helped give a voice to the voiceless. The application had been pending for seven years and the same questions were asked year after year. It was frustrating that the Committee was a more of a barrier to, than an enabler of, the participation of NGOs in the work of the United Nations.

26. **Mr. Hassani Nejad Pirkouhi** (Observer for the Islamic Republic of Iran), in a general statement, said that the joint action by Canada and the United States to undermine the integrity of the United Nations and to abuse human rights issues was nothing new but nonetheless irresponsible.

27. A political organization funded by the United States Department of State and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Canada was being portrayed as a non-governmental organization and was seeking consultative status. If Iran Human Rights Documentation Center was an NGO, perhaps a new definition of the term was needed. His delegation's observations and arguments concerning such a manipulative move had been presented during the 2018 main session of the NGO Committee and were reflected in paragraphs 32, 35 and 41 of the Committee's report (E/2018/32 (Part I)). The nature of the organization would have been further exposed had the secretariat of the NGO Committee shared with the Council the financial reports of the so-called NGO and the issues raised in the question-and-answer sessions conducted in the Committee. Cherry picking and double standards by the United States were not surprising; nor was its abuse of United Nations platforms.

28. It was ludicrous that the United States should continue to block NGOs within Iran from gaining consultative status, while relentlessly pressing for its fabricated and intrusive political organizations to be granted such status. The application of Imam Khomeini Relief Foundation had been blocked by the United States for the past three sessions, and Iranian NGOs had almost no opportunity to engage with the United Nations owing to the travel ban and the illegal unilateral sanctions imposed by the United States against Iranians. The concerns expressed by the United States about civil society space therefore sounded utterly deceitful. It should not expect others to believe it was serious about human rights, democracy or civil society.

29. It was easy to imagine how the United States would have reacted if the situation had been the other way around, and an organization funded by Iran that purported to document the human rights situation in the United States had been seeking consultative status. The organization referred to in draft decision E/2018/L.9 did not shy away from confirming that its foundation had been made possible by a grant from the State Department of the United States. That organization remained in existence thanks to the generous support of the State Department of the United States and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Canada. Regardless of its activities, the organization was not an NGO; draft decision E/2018/L.9 was therefore factually incorrect to refer to it as such.

30. Rejecting the application of double standards, he called for equal treatment in line with the principle of the sovereign equality of all Member States enshrined in Article 2 of the Charter of the United Nations. He also invoked principle 2 of Council resolution 1996/31 on conformity with the spirit, purposes and principles of the Charter, and principle 13 establishing that the basic resources of the organization were to be derived in the main part from contributions of the national affiliates or other components or from individual members. Furthermore, paragraph 57 (a) of resolution 1996/31 explicitly called for the withdrawal of the consultative

status of entities similar to the organization under consideration. He drew attention as well to paragraph 25 of the same Council resolution. The sovereignty, territorial integrity and democratic processes of Iran should be inviolable.

31. An entity formed and funded by an adversary alien State, whose purpose was to intrude in the internal affairs of another Member State and which was solely accountable to the Governments of America and Canada, could hardly contribute to the objectives of the Council or those of the United Nations. Iran continued to encourage further engagement of its civil society with the United Nations, but strongly denounced intrusive acts by external players, especially those with a dark history regarding the promotion and protection of human rights in Iran and elsewhere. His country trusted NGOs funded by Iranians, and run by Iranians for Iranians, above organizations that were biased, politicized and funded by other countries.

32. His delegation hoped that the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and resolution 1996/31 would prevail and the motion to overturn the Committee's decision would be rejected. Such action would establish the Council's credibility in making judicious decisions on granting status to genuine NGOs and would also contribute to upholding the basic principles upon which the United Nations had been founded.

33. **Mr. Montwedi** (South Africa), speaking in explanation of vote before the voting, said that his delegation had voted in the Committee to reject the application. Coercion must not be used to prevent members of the Committee from carrying out their fiduciary responsibilities. The NGO in question should have the opportunity to respond to the questions posed. South Africa would therefore vote against its accreditation.

34. *A recorded vote was taken on draft decision* E/2018/L.9.

*In favour*:

Andorra, Belgium, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Czechia, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Norway, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Spain, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay.

*Against*:

Belarus, China, Iraq, Russian Federation, South Africa, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam.

*Abstaining*:

Algeria, Azerbaijan, Benin, Chad, Ecuador, El Salvador, Ghana, India, Lebanon, Morocco, Peru, Philippines, Rwanda, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Sudan, Tajikistan, Togo.

35. *Draft decision* E/2018/L.9 *was adopted by 22 votes to 7, with 17 abstentions.*

36. **Mr. Escalante Hasbún** (El Salvador) said that his delegation defended the legal attributions of each body, and did not support the reopening of a report of a subsidiary body by the principal body, since that would create a precedent that could then be applied to other subsidiary bodies of the Council or to subsidiary bodies of the General Assembly, such as the Human Rights Council. His delegation had always voiced its opposition to the reopening of reports and had therefore abstained from the voting on draft decisions L.8 and L.9.

37. **Ms. González Tolosa** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) said that her delegation had voted against the draft decision in line with its principled position in defence of the provisions of resolution 1996/31. The members of the Committee had the right to continue to examine an application and the responsibility and prerogative to ask questions to determine whether NGOs met the criteria for consultative status. A decision to reopen discussions set a dangerous precedent and weakened the powers of the Committee.

38. **Ms. Nguyen** Lien Huong (Viet Nam) said that Committee members had a great responsibility to ensure the authenticity and eligibility of NGOs and must be able to pose the necessary questions to establish whether applicants respected the spirit, purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and met the requirements set out in resolution 1996/31. Her delegation had therefore voted against the two draft decisions, since the Committee should be given more time to consider the applications in a comprehensive and appropriate manner.

*Draft decision E/2018/L.10: Applications of the non-governmental organizations Kurdistan Institute for Human Rights and Al-Shafa'a Humanitarian Organization for consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

39. **The President** said that the draft decision had no programme budget implications.

40. **Mr. Al-Khaqani** (Iraq), introducing the draft decision, said that, while Iraq encouraged civil society to engage with the United Nations, the two organizations in question had not been registered as NGOs with the competent national authorities, as

required by Iraqi legislation. Iraq was not opposed to granting them consultative status and would assist them in obtaining the necessary registration. Further clarification was required regarding the scope of their activities and the authenticity of the documents they had presented. His Government therefore requested the support of Council members in returning the applications of the two organizations to the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations.

41. **Ms. Eckels-Currie** (United States of America), speaking in explanation of position before the decision, expressed concern at such unprecedented and unnecessary action and said that the two NGOs had been recommended for consultative status by the Committee. It was not a requirement of resolution 1996/31 that they be registered in the country to which their work related or in which they worked. A number of Member States had defended the Committee's prerogative to block accreditation for human rights organizations, yet remained inexplicably silent when a draft decision to reverse an approval was under consideration.

42. *Draft decision E/2018/L.10 was adopted.*

*Action on the recommendations contained in the report of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations on its 2018 regular session* (E/2018/32 (Part I))

43. **The President** invited the Council to take action on three draft decisions contained in chapter I of the report.

*Draft decision I: Applications for consultative status and requests for reclassification received from non-governmental organizations, as amended by the adoption of draft decisions E/2018/L.8, E/2018/L.9 and E/2018/L.10*

44. *Draft decision I, as amended by the adoption of draft decisions E/2018/L.8, E/2018/L.9 and E/2018/L.10, was adopted.*

*Draft decision II: Requests for withdrawal of consultative status*

*Draft decision III: Report of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations on its 2018 regular session*

45. *Draft decisions II and III were adopted.*

**Agenda item 19: Social and human rights questions**

**(b) Social development (E/2018/26 and A/73/61–E/2018/4)**

46. **Mr. Hannigan** (Iceland), Chair of the Commission for Social Development, introducing the report of the Commission for Social Development on its fifty-sixth session (E/2018/26), said that the priority theme of the Commission had been "Strategies for eradicating poverty to achieve sustainable development for all" and that the theme of the emerging issue had been "Towards sustainable and resilient societies: innovation and interconnectivity for social development". The Commission had also reviewed relevant United Nations plans and programmes of action pertaining to the situation of social groups, as well as the social dimensions of the New Partnership for Africa's Development. It had convened four high-level panels, which had discussed the priority theme, the emerging issue, the third review and appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing and the theme "Towards inclusive, resilient and sustainable development: an evidence-based approach to the mainstreaming of disability in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Agenda 2030". The Chair's summary of the panel discussions was available on the Commission's website. The session had been well attended by representatives of Member States, United Nations entities and accredited NGOs from all regions, and had been marked by fruitful discussions on the panel discussion themes as well as on youth and the family.

47. Four draft resolutions had been adopted, covering the priority theme, the social dimensions of the New Partnership for Africa's Development, the third review and appraisal of the Madrid Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002, and the future organization and methods of work of the Commission for Social Development. After highlighting some key provisions in each draft resolution, the Chair said that the priority theme for the 2019 session would be "Addressing inequalities and challenges to social inclusion through fiscal, wage and social protection policies".

48. **Mr. Padova** (Officer in Charge, Division for Social Policy and Development, Department of Economic and Social Affairs), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the objectives of the International Year of the Family and its follow-up processes (A/73/61–E/2018/4), said that the aim of the report was to contribute to the exchange of good practices in family policymaking. It focused on national efforts and provided examples of policies that promoted work-family balance, empowered women and girls, and enhanced social integration and

intergenerational solidarity. It also provided information on recent trends in research and awareness-raising activities. Progress and growing interest in those areas had been noted and initiatives to promote them (for example, social security and child allowances, increased quality time between parents and children, and parenting education) had proven effective. Member States were encouraged to further recognize that family-oriented policies and programmes were integral to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and to provide greater support for research and impact assessment studies.

49. **Mr. Ríos Sánchez** (Mexico) said that his delegation would continue to advocate for determining the best ways to avoid overlaps in the working methods and substantive themes of the Commission for Social Development, the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly. The adoption of the draft resolution on future organization and methods of work of the Commission for Social Development would be a step in the right direction; however, the Council and General Assembly should consider amending the Commission's mandate as well as those of other subsidiary bodies of the Council.

50. The proposed priority theme for the 2019 session of the Commission was consistent with the direction that his delegation had suggested should be taken by the Council and the high-level political forum on sustainable development. Pursuant to paragraph 7 of the draft resolution on future organization and methods of work of the Commission for Social Development, his delegation hoped that future Commission documents would refer only to review of the outcome document of the high-level meeting of the General Assembly, "The way forward: a disability-inclusive development agenda towards 2015 and beyond", which had been adopted by means of General Assembly resolution 68/3.

51. Regarding the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the objectives of the International Year of the Family and its follow-up processes, his delegation welcomed the emphasis placed on policies on the protection and well-being of the family, in fulfilment of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Nevertheless, the link between the 2030 Agenda and the human rights agenda was crucial; the 2030 Agenda was based on human rights principles and standards that were directly related to family life. The participation of civil society organizations was key to attaining the objectives set out in the report.

52. Lastly, while welcoming the emphasis on impact assessment studies, he wished to point out that data disaggregation was also vital to determining impacts on different family members and different types of families.

53. **Ms. Silvera Flores** (Uruguay) said that her delegation particularly appreciated the reference in the report on the International Year of the Family to discussions in the Third Committee of the General Assembly in which several Member States had acknowledged the fundamental role played by families in social inclusion and integration and highlighted the existence of different forms of the family in different political, social and cultural systems. Different forms of the family were also recognized in the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development held in Cairo and the Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action.

54. Uruguay implemented policies, programmes and plans that recognized and responded to such diversity, and promoted an atmosphere of tolerance, inclusion and non-discrimination. Her delegation understood that the term "family" in the report referred to all types of families and would continue to promote recognition and inclusion of a broader definition of the term "family" within the framework of the United Nations.

55. **Mr. Escalante Hasbún** (El Salvador) said that the discussions in the Commission for Social Development should be more current, a concern that his delegation had already expressed prior to the start of the fifty-sixth session. The priority theme of the session had been very pertinent; he welcomed, in particular, the emphasis on multidimensional poverty, an issue that had drawn greater attention in recent times and a key theme of the 2030 Agenda that was relevant not only to middle-income countries such as his own but also to many other countries. In that respect, the Commission had indeed fulfilled its role to promote social inclusion.

56. Nevertheless, the Council should steer the Commission more firmly towards avoiding duplication of efforts to address the needs of older persons, young people and persons with disabilities. While duplication was sometimes deliberate and justified, the Commission should make every effort to eliminate it where possible by forging closer links with other forums. Lastly, his delegation wished to express its wholehearted support for the remarks just made by the representative of Uruguay on different forms of the family.

*Action on the recommendations contained in the report of the Commission for Social Development on its fifty-sixth session (E/2018/26-E/CN.5/2018/6)*

57. **The President** invited the Council to take action on the draft proposals contained in chapter I, sections A and B, of the report.

*Section A*

*Draft resolution I: Future organization and methods of work of the Commission for Social Development*

*Draft resolution II: Social dimensions of the New Partnership for Africa's Development*

*Draft resolution III: Strategies for eradicating poverty to achieve sustainable development for all*

*Draft resolution IV: Third review and appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002*

58. *Draft resolutions I, II, III and IV were adopted.*

*Section B*

*Draft decision: Report of the Commission for Social Development on its fifty-sixth session and provisional agenda and documentation for the fifty-seventh session*

59. *The draft decision was adopted.*

60. **Mr. Ríos Sánchez** (Mexico) said that, in light of the resolution on methods of work that had just been adopted, his delegation hoped that future documents on the subject of persons with disabilities would reflect the outcome document of the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on disability and development, adopted as General Assembly resolution 68/3.

61. **The President** said she took it that the Council wished to take note of the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the objectives of the International Year of the Family and its follow-up processes, as contained in document E/2018/4.

62. *It was so decided.*

### (h) Comprehensive implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action

63. **The President** said that the General Assembly, in paragraph 33 of its resolution 62/220, had decided that the Assembly, the Council and the Human Rights Council should constitute a three-tiered intergovernmental process for the comprehensive implementation of and follow-up to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action.

64. She informed the Council that no documentation or draft proposals had been submitted on the item.

*The meeting rose at noon.*

United Nations E/2018/SR.18

# Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
11 May 2018

Original: English

**2018 session**
27 July 2017–26 July 2018
**First coordination and management meeting**

**Summary record of the 18th meeting**
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 17 April 2018, at 3 p.m.

*President*: Ms. King (Vice-President). . . . . (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines)

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Agenda item 12: Coordination, programme and other questions

(a) Reports of coordination bodies

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18-06113 (E)

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*In the absence of Ms. Chatardova (Czechia), Ms. King (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

*The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.*

**Agenda item 12: Coordination, programme and other questions**

**(a) Reports of coordination bodies** (E/2018/48)

1. **The Deputy Secretary-General**, introducing the annual overview report of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) for 2017 (E/2018/48), said that the key role of CEB, as the highest-level internal coordination mechanism in the United Nations, was to strengthen synergies and promote coherence and coordination among the organizations of the United Nations system on issues of system-wide concern. The Board was also, one might say, an internal managerial laboratory. The Secretary-General, as Chair of CEB, had steered the work of the Board towards supporting the second year of implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by bringing the entities of the United Nations system closer together, in a deeper effort to transcend institutional boundaries.

2. The Board had adopted a new meeting format to ensure that it was well positioned to provide forward-looking guidance and thought leadership. With the aim of bringing young people's thinking and needs closer to the United Nations leadership and into the shaping of the United Nations system's future, the Secretary-General had invited his Envoy on Youth to address the Board at its second regular session of 2017. Such interaction would continue. In November 2017, the Secretary-General had proposed and the Board had agreed to separate operational support work addressed by the United Nations Development Group from the system-wide policy roles of the High-level Committee on Programmes and the High-level Committee on Management, with the strengthened Group, renamed the United Nations Sustainable Development Group, being outside the architecture of CEB.

3. In support of the interlinked and indivisible nature of the 2030 Agenda, the Board pursued an approach that balanced the three dimensions of sustainable development and integrated the development, peace, humanitarian affairs and human rights perspectives. In that context, in 2017 the Board had focused on supporting the application of technological innovations by Member States for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, agreed on a common approach towards leadership within the United Nations system and promoted joint efforts in the area of risk and resilience. As a result, CEB had promoted system-wide actions that had been anchored in a common vision and a sense of shared responsibility and that had drawn on the specialized capacities and expertise of the United Nations system as a whole.

4. In the first of three specific areas of focus, the Board had examined the opportunities and challenges offered by scientific and technological advances. It had concluded that technological innovations, when applied to business processes, had the potential to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of programme delivery. As a result, the Board had decided to explore areas for United Nations system engagement on frontier technologies that included both the internal application of new technologies and the engagement of leading external experts on implications for the Organization and its work.

5. Secondly, a leadership framework had been endorsed by the Board in response to the General Assembly's request that the United Nations system should align its staff capacities to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The framework provided a blueprint for building and strengthening United Nations capacity at all levels and in all functions and locations. It aimed to foster broader cultural change against the backdrop of current reform efforts. The leadership framework had been developed by the High-level Committee on Programmes, the High-level Committee on Management and the United Nations Development Group, with facilitation by the United Nations System Staff College. It was rooted in the shared understanding that United Nations leadership must be norm-based, principled, inclusive, accountable, multidimensional, transformational, collaborative and self-applied. Leadership behaviours should manifest themselves in support of the 2030 Agenda in four key ways: achieving impact for the people served by the United Nations, driving transformational change, employing systems thinking and engaging in co-creation through partnership.

6. A third system-wide initiative was an analytical framework on risk and resilience, adopted by the Board in November 2017. The framework had been developed in response to General Assembly and Security Council resolutions recognizing that an integrated and coherent approach among relevant actors was critical to advancing the objectives of the Organization across the three pillars. The framework had been developed through the High-level Committee on Programmes, in a system-wide effort led by the World Food Programme. It had three elements at its core: systems thinking; the risk and resilience equation; and a prevention "lens".

Those elements, which were explained in greater detail in the report, were, in short, intended to form a coordinated approach to addressing threats that could hinder or reverse progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals. The term "systems thinking" referred to the fundamental relationships among risks and other sustainable development issues at multiple levels, while the so-called "risk and resilience equation" was useful for organizing efforts across pillars and defining collective outcomes. Applying a prevention lens was intended to help foster a proactive approach in the implementation of measures to increase resilience and lessen risks.

7. In November 2017, the Secretary-General had called for the CEB members' engagement on three key issues that deserved maximum attention and commitment from the entire leadership of the United Nations: promoting gender parity, combating sexual exploitation and abuse, and addressing sexual harassment within the organizations of the United Nations system. As a result, efforts to achieve gender parity had been heightened across the United Nations system. Since the previous Board meeting, system-wide efforts to combat sexual exploitation and abuse had been championed by the Secretary-General's Special Coordinator on improving the United Nations response to sexual exploitation and abuse through direct communication with CEB entities that had a field presence. The Board had also welcomed the Secretary-General's call for the establishment of a task force on addressing sexual harassment within the organizations of the United Nations system. The task force, under the leadership of the Chair of the High-level Committee on Management, had begun its work in late 2017 and was expected to complete its work by the end of 2018.

8. The Secretary-General believed that the Board provided a valuable space for United Nations system leaders to explore opportunities for developing and scaling up system-wide efforts in support of the 2030 Agenda. He and the Board members shared a strong commitment to work together and jointly contribute in every way they could in support of Member States' ambitions.

9. **Mr. Hilale** (Morocco) said that the report would promote coherent, strategic implementation of the 2030 Agenda by helping identify areas in which international cooperation should be enhanced. The report was aligned with the Secretary-General's vision for the reform of the United Nations development system, which his delegation fully supported. The reform process should take into account ways to implement the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development in developing countries, in particular least developed countries and African countries.

10. His delegation welcomed the steps taken by the Board to improve collaboration among United Nations entities in support of the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and encouraged the Board to continue to promote integrated action in the areas of climate change and sustainable development. It hoped that the cooperation between the High-level Committee on Management and the United Nations Development Group on field office reform would result in a coherent strategy for supporting United Nations country teams by 2022. The Secretary-General's proposals for strengthening coordination and coherence among United Nations entities should fully respect the development models of Member States taking into account their political, economic, social and cultural contexts. Only national ownership of activities would ensure that the envisaged resident coordinator system was effective. In that connection, the United Nations Development Assistance Framework should be the sole instrument governing cooperation between Governments and the United Nations development system. His delegation supported the Secretary-General's plans to establish a sustainable financing strategy that was based on predictable resources and in line with General Assembly resolution 71/243 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development.

11. **Mr. Gómez Camacho** (Mexico) said that his delegation was pleased that the report had been introduced by the Deputy Secretary-General in person and that the meeting was an opportunity for substantive dialogue with the CEB secretariat, which meant that the adoption of the report was no longer simply an administrative procedure. That represented a very positive step towards transforming the Council into a forum for dialogue on development issues among Member States and between Member States and the United Nations system.

12. His delegation welcomed the discussion of rapid technological change in the report. The pace of such change and the sheer quantity of emerging technologies would have an enormous impact on economic and social policies and on people's lives in general. For instance, according to some estimates, 2 billion jobs would be lost over the course of the next 20 years as a result of technological advancements. However, the phenomenon had not been given due consideration in planning for implementation of the 2030 Agenda, even though it had the potential to be severely disruptive. Member States and the United Nations system should seek to

understand the opportunities and risks presented by scientific and technological innovation and link them with specific Sustainable Development Goal targets in order to develop appropriate policies and a coherent vision for a smooth transition.

13. **Ms. Petrova** (Director of the secretariat of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB)) said that the Secretary-General had given a high priority to reforming the work of the Board. CEB aimed to support all efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda. It strove to support Member States and avoid creating silos. The Secretary-General was unable to attend the meeting, but the new format he had chosen for the report would allow him and the Deputy Secretary-General to respond directly to questions from Member States. The report reflected the Secretary-General's view that the United Nations should foster dialogue on the impact of rapid technological change, support Member States and promote the development of shared strategies to enable future generations to adapt to technological advancements.

*The meeting rose at 3.40 p.m.*

United Nations E/2018/SR.19

# Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
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**2018 session**
27 July 2017–26 July 2018
First coordination and management meeting

**Summary record of the 19th meeting**
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 18 April 2018, at 10 a.m.

*President*: Ms. King (Vice-President) ..... (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines)

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18-06183 (E)

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*In the absence of Ms. Chatardova (Czechia), Ms. King (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

*The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.*

**Agenda item 11: Implementation of and follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits** (A/73/69-E/2018/47 and E/2018/11)

**Agenda item 13: Implementation of General Assembly resolutions 50/227, 52/12 B, 57/270 B, 60/265, 61/16, 67/290 and 68/1**

1. **Mr. Arvelo** (Chair, Committee on World Food Security), introducing the report on the main decisions and policy recommendations of the Committee on World Food Security, transmitted in the note by the Secretary-General (A/73/69–E/2018/47), said that the Committee was deeply concerned because the 2017 State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World Report indicated that the global community was not on track to achieve the relevant targets in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The latest figures compiled by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) showed that global hunger had escalated by 5 per cent in 2016, swelling the number of food insecure to 815 million. Persons were considered to be food insecure if they were unable to produce or buy safe and nutritious food, and did not know where their next meal would come from. Food insecurity overwhelmed a disproportionate number of women and children in the global South, where the main drivers of hunger and malnutrition were human-caused conflict and climate change, and the protracted crises that followed. Millions more would soon have to choose between accepting an early death and escaping their communities and countries in a desperate bid to survive elsewhere. At the same time, malnutrition was fuelling rising rates of obesity in developed and developing countries alike, unleashing an epidemic of endocrine and cardiovascular diseases. In light of those challenges, the international community must take up the fight against hunger with the moral certainty and political courage to which it had committed when agreeing to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 2 on ending hunger and achieving food security.

2. The reform of the Committee on World Food Security had made it the most inclusive platform within the United Nations system: in addition to its member States, it brought together actors from civil society, the private sector, academia, research institutes, financial institutions, charitable organizations, United Nations entities and other organizations committed to the eradication of hunger and malnutrition. Open, inclusive and transparent collaboration was critical to ensuring that the products of the Committee were globally valued. The effective instruments developed by the Committee that were being adopted by a growing number of countries included its Voluntary Guidelines on the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food in the Context of National Food Security and its Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security.

3. The Committee continued to fulfil its coordination mandate, with a view to achieving policy coherence in the area of food and nutrition security. The achievements of the Committee at its forty-fourth session included approving a set of policy recommendations developed by the High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition of the Committee, entitled "Sustainable Forestry for Food Security and Nutrition", which would complement the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030. The Committee had also underlined the need to support implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, especially its General recommendation No. 34 (2016) on the rights of rural women. Gender equality and women's empowerment were vital because the barriers that restricted women's ability to achieve their productive potential also endangered the food security of their families, communities and countries. Another outcome of the session had been the Committee's encouragement of all stakeholders to facilitate the dissemination and promote the use of the Global Strategic Framework for Food Security and Nutrition, a reference document that offered Governments practical guidance on the strategies agreed by the Committee.

4. The Committee would once again send a contribution to the high-level political forum on sustainable development, focusing on three messages. First, enhanced access to natural resources by small-scale food producers would contribute to food security, improved nutrition, stability and resilience. Second, sustainable management of natural resources was critical for building resilience and for mitigating climate change and adapting to its effects. Smallholders were particularly vulnerable to climate change, land degradation and diminishing biodiversity. Thirdly, investing responsibly and inclusively in sustainable food systems should be at the core of rural and urban transformation.

5. While the Committee awaited the results of two studies being carried out by the High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition, on multisectoral financing partnerships and agroecology, it

was undertaking an ambitious project: along with FAO and the World Health Organization (WHO), it was following up the outcomes of the Second International Conference on Nutrition and working to implement the United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition. Its contribution to the Decade was a package of voluntary guidelines on nutrition and food systems for which it was currently drafting terms of reference. Technical experts agreed that sustainable food security could not be achieved without healthy diets and sustainable food systems; as such, the active participation of all Member States was crucial to the success of the Decade.

6. **Ms. Oenema** (Coordinator, United Nations System Standing Committee on Nutrition), introducing the report of the United Nations System Standing Committee on Nutrition contained in E/2018/11 on behalf of the Chair of the Committee, Ms. Richter, said that one in three people worldwide was malnourished: overweight, underweight, deficient in micronutrients or a combination of those. All countries were affected; moreover, malnutrition was not distributed equally: certain groups were being left behind. The good news was that the international community had started to address the problem: the 2030 Agenda and the United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition called for urgent, comprehensive and coherent action and emphasized the need to mobilize more actors for nutrition, which would lead to sustainable change.

7. The United Nations System Standing Committee on Nutrition looked at nutrition problems holistically, to ensure that the mandates and work of all United Nations member agencies addressed them comprehensively. Its mandate was to ensure the coherence of nutrition policies and advocacy, which included the harmonization of United Nations policies and activities and the provision of global guidance on the harmonization of concepts, policies, strategies and programmes. In 2016, the Committee had been revitalized and a clear scope given to its work: at the global level, it was there for all countries and people, striving to eliminate all forms of malnutrition in an integrated, comprehensive manner based on the United Nations human rights framework. Its four strategic objectives for the period 2016–2020 were to maximize the coherence of United Nations policy and advocacy for nutrition, support consistent and accountable delivery on the ground, track emerging issues that impact nutrition, and share knowledge across the United Nations system. The General Assembly had called on the Committee to play a coordinating role in support of the United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition.

8. The Committee had contributed to the integration of nutrition into various policy and governing processes; it had worked with such entities as the Committee on World Food Security, WHO and the United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases. It sought to ensure that nutrition was on the agenda of the high-level political forum on sustainable development. In support of its work to maximize coherence between different bodies' approaches to nutrition, the Committee produced discussion papers on topics that went beyond the expertise of individual agencies, and on topics on which agreement had not yet been reached, in order to stimulate discussion in support of policy convergence. The Committee also provided guidance on translating nutrition policies and targets into actions at the country level: for instance, it had developed a guidance note on integrating nutrition into United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs) and emergency works. The Committee had supported the development of the progress report on the United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition, which would be issued in the coming weeks.

9. In 2018, the Committee would continue working to advance the coherence of the nutrition agenda, including through the biennial progress report on the Decade, the high-level political forum and the upcoming High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases. It would convene a special meeting to link nutrition to the Sustainable Development Goals under review at the 2018 high-level political forum. It would further strengthen the links with its United Nations member bodies, including those, such as the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), which did not have clear nutrition mandates, but could contribute significantly to advancing the nutrition agenda. Such coherence would benefit the implementation of both the Nutrition Decade and the 2030 Agenda.

10. **Mr. Cadena Duarte** (Ecuador) said that food security, nutrition and agricultural development were fundamental to the development of his country. As such, the right to safe access to healthy, sufficient and nutritious food was recognized in the national Constitution. The Government continued to improve food security through food programmes, including a programme for school children and one for those groups lacking adequate access to food. Ecuador stood ready to participate actively in the implementation of the United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition.

11. **Mr. Sharif** (Sudan) said that his country was an active member of the Committee on World Food Security, and noted that the report just presented by

Mr. Arvelo had been prepared largely when the Sudan had been Chair of the Committee on World Food Security. At the forty-fourth session of the Committee on World Food Security, the Sudan had organized a side event on the state of world food security and nutrition, and noted that such side events often helped to build momentum. An independent evaluation of the Committee on World Food Security had revealed a lack of awareness of its policies and major reports; he urged the Rome-based and other United Nations agencies to respond by stepping up efforts to make its work known. He also stressed the importance of developing and implementing food security policies at the national level. The Committee, along with all stakeholders, must find innovative ways to mobilize resources for food security. As a member of the Bureau of the Committee on World Food Security, the Sudan would continue to actively support its work.

12. **Mr. Jakobi** (Germany) said that it was essential to make the work of the Committee on Food Security known in New York. Its work was pivotal to realizing the Sustainable Development Goals, especially ending hunger, achieving food security and improved nutrition, and promoting sustainable agriculture, which was key to sustainable development more broadly. Highlighting the valuable coordination role of the United Nations Standing Committee on Nutrition, he encouraged all Member States to contribute to the United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition, since nutrition was critical to the achievement of many development goals.

13. **Mr. Escalante Hasbún** (El Salvador) said that better coordination with the Rome-based agencies was needed. Coordination was especially important in view of the ongoing repositioning of the United Nations development system, as those agencies contributed expertise to country teams. The Rome-based agencies should be more involved in the thematic work of the Council and more visible in the high-level political forum on sustainable development.

14. FAO had been supporting the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), in particular its very active working group on family farming. CELAC was preparing for its fifth Ministerial Meeting on Family Farming by, inter alia, continuing to implement the CELAC Plan for Food and Nutrition Security and the Eradication of Hunger 2025. The support provided by FAO in that regard was a good example of cooperation between a Rome-based agency and a regional group.

15. Coordination on nutrition was vital. The upcoming High-level Meeting on the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases would provide a chance to put nutrition on the agenda. The Commission on the Status of Women had also addressed the related issues of land ownership, productivity, and food security at its sixty-second session under the theme of empowering rural women and girls.

16. **Mr. Obermeyer** (World Health Organization), speaking also on behalf of FAO, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the World Food Programme (WFP), said that both the Committee on World Food Security and the United Nations Standing Committee on Nutrition were making valuable contributions to the United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition. The forthcoming voluntary guidelines for food systems and nutrition to be produced by the Committee on World Food Security would be a substantial contribution to the Decade, while coordination by the United Nations Standing Committee on Nutrition would strengthen its implementation. The first report on the implementation of the Decade would be presented to the General Assembly at its current session.

17. He commended the efforts by the United Nations Standing Committee on Nutrition to support discussion of nutrition across United Nations governing bodies and committees, and the recent achievements of the Committee on World Food Security, including its policy recommendations entitled "Sustainable Forestry for Food Security and Nutrition" and its commitment to rural women under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Food security and nutrition must remain high on the agenda in New York, given the role of the United Nations in the global follow-up and review of such processes as the United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition and the 2030 Agenda. Although nutrition was enshrined in Sustainable Development Goal 2, it was, in fact, a cornerstone of the entire 2030 Agenda.

18. **Mr. Arvelo** (Chair, Committee on World Food Security) said that, as in Ecuador, the right to food was enshrined in the Constitution of the Dominican Republic. All Member States must incorporate that right into their national legislation. He welcomed the leadership of China and Germany in facilitating the conduct of the ongoing independent external evaluation of the Committee's work.

19. The commitment undertaken by CELAC to eradicate hunger and all forms of malnutrition by 2025, five years before the deadline set by the international community, was commendable. Greater cooperation between Rome- and New York-based agencies in enhancing food security should be promoted by strengthening collaboration among their secretariats and

ensuring that ministries of foreign affairs and agency representatives communicated directly on realizing the right to food.

20. **Ms. Oenema** (Coordinator, United Nations System Standing Committee on Nutrition) noted with appreciation that Ecuador had been one of the first countries to formulate concrete commitments to implement General Assembly resolution 70/259 on the United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition. The 2018 high-level political forum on sustainable development and the third High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases would provide important opportunities to discuss issues related to food and nutrition. In conclusion, she welcomed the collaboration among the member agencies of the Standing Committee.

21. **Mr. Sharif** (Sudan) said that he shared Mr. Arvelo's concern regarding the recent increase in the number of hungry and food-insecure people worldwide. The Sudan had significant agricultural and natural resources, including arable land and water, as well as weather that was conducive to the cultivation of a variety of crops, and in 2014 his Government had launched an initiative to enhance food security in the Arab world. He called on United Nations agencies to provide technical assistance and expertise to support the implementation of that initiative.

22. **The President** invited the Council to take note of the report on the main decisions and policy recommendations of the Committee on World Food Security, transmitted in a note by the Secretary-General (A/73/69–E/2018/47) and the report of the United Nations System Standing Committee on Nutrition, transmitted in a note by the Secretary-General (E/2018/11).

23. *It was so decided.*

**Agenda item 18: Economic and environmental questions** (*continued*)

**(e) Environment** (A/73/25)

24. **Mr. Ahmad** (Deputy Director, New York Office of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)), introducing the report of the United Nations Environment Assembly of UNEP on its third session (A/73/25), said that the session, held in Nairobi under the theme "Towards a pollution-free planet," had been attended by representatives of 157 Member States and of a number of United Nations system entities, major groups, secretariats of environmental conventions and other stakeholders. The United Nations Environment Assembly had welcomed the pledges made by more than 2.3 million individuals worldwide to take action to reduce pollution as part of the "Beat Pollution" campaign launched by UNEP, and the Assembly's high-level segment had featured four leadership dialogues among the world's ministers for the environment and a multi-stakeholder dialogue on topics related to combating pollution.

25. The United Nations Environment Assembly had adopted a ministerial declaration in which it had expressed its determination to prevent, mitigate and manage pollution by encouraging scientific research and improving data capacity; increasing the dissemination of public information and enhancing transparency; supporting science-based decision-making in the public and private sectors; promoting cooperation in the implementation of relevant multilateral agreements; fostering inclusive and sustainable economic productivity, innovation and job creation and the development of environmentally-sound technologies; encouraging sustainable consumption and production patterns by raising awareness among consumers and making it easier to reuse products and services and to reduce waste; advancing policies and approaches designed to ensure the environmentally-sound management of chemicals and waste; and working with local governments to promote the use of sustainable models of urban development in order to address pollution. The Assembly had also adopted eight draft resolutions calling for accelerated action and strengthened partnerships to combat various types of environmental pollution. In addition, it had adopted a draft resolution outlining the process whereby it would contribute to the high-level political forum on sustainable development, including by incorporating into its agenda a standing item on the matter and by ensuring that, during the forum, the President of the Assembly conveyed the main messages agreed upon at its sessions.

26. Enhanced synergies between the Council and the United Nations Environment Assembly were required to ensure system-wide integration of the Assembly's work as well as follow-up and review of the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda. And the institutional links between the United Nations Environment Assembly and the high-level political forum should be leveraged to achieve the outcomes of the Assembly's third session and contribute to implementation of the 2030 Agenda. For example, the Council and the high-level political forum might wish to consider the ministerial declaration and resolutions adopted at the Assembly's third session during deliberations on their own draft ministerial declarations. Member States could also consider measures to prevent pollution on the

Organization's premises and in its operations, including by reducing reliance on single-use plastic products.

27. When the General Assembly, at its seventy-third session, considered the report of the United Nations Environment Assembly (A/73/25), it would examine the shortfall in regular funding for the sessions of the United Nations Environment Assembly arising from the expansion of its membership, pursuant to the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) (A/RES/66/288, Annex). While the United Nations Environment Assembly currently relied on voluntary contributions to maintain its universal membership, it was uncertain whether such contributions would be adequate to fund future sessions and support the participation of developing countries, including least developed countries and small island developing States. In conclusion, he commended the President of the Council for participating in the third session of the United Nations Environment Assembly.

28. **Mr. Escalante Hasbún** (El Salvador) said that, at the fourth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly, his delegation would focus on finding new ways to ensure the participation of all Member States, in particular those that did not have permanent representatives in Nairobi, in all stages of the negotiations of the United Nations Environment Assembly, including preparatory meetings. He welcomed the efforts of UNEP to support the participation of such countries through innovative mechanisms that enabled them to follow the deliberations remotely. The inputs of UNEP into the deliberations of the General Assembly and of the Council during the high-level political forum must be strengthened, in line with the relevant resolution of the United Nations Environment Assembly. Indeed, the five Sustainable Development Goals that would be addressed at the 2018 high-level political forum were directly related to the environmental dimension of sustainable development. In conclusion, he asked whether a theme had been chosen for the fourth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly.

29. **Mr. Ahmad** (Deputy Director, New York Office of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)) said that the Committee of Permanent Representatives of the United Nations Environment Assembly was considering ways to enable the participation of all delegations in all stages of the Assembly's negotiations. The Assembly's fourth session would be held under the theme "Innovation of sustainable development and sustainable consumption and production".

30. **The President** invited the Council to take note of the report of the United Nations Environment Assembly of UNEP on its third session (A/73/25).

31. *It was so decided.*

### (h) International cooperation in tax matters (E/2018/45)

*Draft decision: Venue and dates of and provisional agenda for the sixteenth session of the Committee*

32. **The President** drew attention to the draft decision entitled "Venue and dates of and provisional agenda for the sixteenth session of the Committee", contained in chapter IV of the report of the Committee of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters on its fifteenth session (E/2018/45). She took it that the Council wished to adopt the draft decision.

33. *The draft decision was adopted.*

34. **The President** said she took it that the Council wished to take note of the report of the Committee of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters on its fifteenth session (E/2018/45).

35. *It was so decided.*

### (i) Geospatial information (E/2017/46)

*Draft decision: Report of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management on its seventh session and provisional agenda and dates for the eighth session of the Committee*

36. **The President** drew attention to the draft decision entitled "Report of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management on its seventh session and provisional agenda and dates for the eighth session of the Committee", contained in chapter I, section A of the report of the Committee of Experts (E/2017/46). She took it that the Council wished to adopt the draft decision.

37. *The draft decision was adopted.*

### (l) Assistance to third States affected by the application of sanctions

38. **The President** recalled that the Council, in its resolution 2000/32, had reaffirmed the important role of the General Assembly, the Council and the Committee for Programme and Coordination in mobilizing and monitoring, as appropriate, the economic assistance efforts of the international community and the United Nations system to States confronted with special economic problems arising from the carrying out of preventive or enforcement measures imposed by the

Security Council and, as appropriate, in identifying solutions to the special economic problems of those States.

39. The Council had decided to continue its consideration of the issue under agenda item 18, "Economic and environmental questions", taking into account the relevant decisions of the Assembly and the Security Council. No advance documentation had been submitted under agenda item 18 (l) and there was no draft proposal before the Council.

**Agenda item 2: Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters** (*continued*) (E/2018/L.7)

*Draft decision: Application of the intergovernmental organization Inter-American Institute for Global Change Research for observer status with the Economic and Social Council*

40. **The President** drew attention to the draft decision entitled "Application of the intergovernmental organization Inter-American Institute for Global Change Research for observer status with the Economic and Social Council" (E/2018/L.7). The draft decision contained no programme budget implications. She took it that the Council wished to adopt the draft decision.

41. *The draft decision was adopted.*

42. *The President* said that efforts must be made to strengthen the Council's role as a forum for constructive policy dialogue while preserving those aspects of its work that functioned effectively. In that connection, Council members must participate actively in coordination and management meetings, as they provided a unique opportunity to examine the work of the Council's subsidiary bodies and functional commissions.

*The meeting rose at 11.40 a.m.*

United Nations E/2018/SR.20

# Economic and Social Council

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**2018 session**
27 July 2017–26 July 2018
Integration segment

**Summary record of the 20th meeting**
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 1 May 2018, at 10 a.m.

*President*: Mr. Pecsteen de Buytswerve (Vice-President) ..... (Belgium)

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*In the absence of Ms. Chatardova (Czechia), Mr. Pecsteen de Buytswerve (Belgium), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

*The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.*

**Agenda item 8: Integration segment**

*Opening of the segment*

1. **The President**, opening the integration segment of the Economic and Social Council, said that while significant progress had been made in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the world was still afflicted by economic uncertainty, rising inequalities and increasing impacts of climate change. At a time when multilateralism and multi-stakeholder engagement were paramount, the Council was uniquely equipped to advance sustainable development and provide a central platform for fostering dialogue and finding integrated solutions.

2. Under the theme "Innovative communities: leveraging technology and innovation to build sustainable and resilient societies", the 2018 integration segment would bring together key stakeholders and analyse pathways to building resilience through integrated policies with a view to advancing the 2030 Agenda. In that context, the segment must discuss how policymakers could use integrated policy approaches to enhance resilience and inclusion at all levels; promote the meaningful exchange of best practices in leveraging technology and innovation for a resilient future; showcase policy instruments and mechanisms that supported risk management and reduction across the hazard spectrum; and discuss how technology and innovation could strengthen the resilience of public policy and governance structures with a view to fostering sustainable and resilient societies.

3. Despite the relevance and importance of resilience to both developed and developing countries, there was no blueprint for what constituted resilience or how to accomplish it. While approaches to the multidimensional concepts of resilience and vulnerabilities might differ, the 2030 Agenda had charted the way forward and provided the necessary tools. Additionally, the appropriate, efficient, equitable and sustainable use of technology and innovation could support international efforts to build and maintain resilient societies. The current segment was the ideal place to share knowledge and lessons learned in order to avoid the mistakes of the past and encourage integration among the relevant sciences and disciplines. While achieving integration with a view to realizing the 2030 Agenda and addressing the multitude of hindrances to resilience was no easy task, the international community had a duty to urgently address those interconnected and complex challenges, whether they related to policy, stable and sustainable financing, capacity-building or to closing capacity and technological gaps. National policies and structures would continue to be at the heart of implementation efforts, but strong collaboration with all partners towards common country development objectives would be essential to ensuring concerted and coherent actions at every level.

4. **Mr. Jamoliddin** (Deputy Minister of Economic Development and Trade of Tajikistan), said that his country was a key source of water for Central Asia, and 60 per cent of its water resources were located in glaciers. As a result, the national hydropower sector was very vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, which had already led to an increase in natural disasters and had degraded the ecosystem. Each year, the effects of climate change destroyed facilities and led to significant financial losses for citizens and the national economy. The effective use of water resources in the face of that phenomenon would be an important factor in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Tajikistan had worked with the United Nations to launch the International Decade for Action, "Water for Sustainable Development", 2018–2028 in order to promote collaboration in that regard.

5. The implementation of the 2030 Agenda in Tajikistan was taking place against the backdrop of increasing threats and crises, including food and climate crises, the degradation of environmental resources, natural and human-caused disasters and the spread of disease. Threats of that nature significantly undermined peace and security and stability in the world, and could hamper the progress of sustainable development. His Government was working with international partners to repair, modernize and build resilient hydropower stations. By implementing international best practices, it was also making progress in forecasting, assessing and managing climate risk. The construction of hydroelectric facilities also served to decrease water-related threats.

6. The Government collaborated with partners at the regional and international levels to mitigate risks and improve the economic, social and environmental aspects of development. It would continue to cooperate fruitfully with the international community and the United Nations system, including the Economic and Social Council, to achieve its goals.

7. **Mr. Liu** Zhenmin (Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs) said that advances in science and technology held immense promise for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

However, the rapid pace of technological change made it difficult for Governments and societies to benefit from innovations, and the advantages of cutting-edge breakthroughs were often not equally accessible to all members of society. In order to truly leverage the benefits of science and technology for sustainable development, the international community must prioritize pro-poor, equitable solutions.

8. Science and technology contributed to finding solutions to a number of major risks that exacerbated vulnerabilities and had a regressive impact on development, climate change foremost among them. Technology could provide the tools to teach and empower disadvantaged groups in society with a view to combating rising inequality, vulnerability and exclusion, which were undermining the sustainability and resilience of societies and eroding human rights. In response to the challenges of urbanization, technology could help to make cities smarter and more sustainable by facilitating new transport systems and improving natural resource management. Innovations in sustainable fishing, enhanced surveillance of ocean acidification and environmentally sensitive forms of pollution prevention and clean-up had been shown to help mitigate and address environmental degradation caused by climate change and unsustainable consumption and production patterns.

9. Technologies must be geared towards supporting sustainable and resilient societies. In that connection, the Technology Facilitation Mechanism was designed to provide a platform for discussing and accessing information, best practices and lessons learned in science and technology, as well as policies and initiatives to facilitate innovation. The Mechanism consisted of an online platform and a collaborative multi-stakeholder forum on science, technology and innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals.

10. In order to leverage technologies and innovation to build sustainable and resilient societies, efforts to support communities should be tailored and locally driven. Communities, municipal governments and community-based organizations all contributed critical, local knowledge and experience. Furthermore, the use of technology and innovation must be inclusive and leave no one behind, as sustainability and resilience relied fundamentally on equity. Integrated approaches must be implemented with the utmost urgency. Given that crises and shocks were increasingly complex and spanned the economic, social and environmental spheres, working across silos would help to focus on the potential co-benefits and trade-offs of policy interventions and technologies. Finally, the international community must build capacities and institutions for anticipating risk, and for planning with a view to effectively leveraging technologies.

*Interactive dialogue on "The quest for resilience and sustainability: seizing the moment"*

11. **Mr. Porter** (Journalist and book author), moderator, said that resilience was one of the most important challenges facing the global community. The shock of climate change would be significant, have the greatest impact on the poorest States and require a tremendous international response. Nevertheless, it was not the only shock to consider in building resilience. Technological shocks would affect labour markets around the world and change patterns of globalization. The advent of labour-replacing technology would also create new challenges for development strategies. Political challenges, which could arise unexpectedly, would be another issue. For example, a potential trade war among the world's largest economies would have far-reaching impacts, especially on the poorest States.

12. Technology would play a role in the necessary energy transition for climate change adaptation and mitigation, but it would not be a panacea. In fact, the main challenge facing some countries, such as the United States, was the need to mobilize political will. For other countries, investing in the energy transition would be costly and require resources. For instance, poor countries likely to be flooded by rising sea levels must determine how much to invest in mitigation and reducing their carbon footprint, and how much to invest in industrialization in order to create a society less dependent on agriculture and more able to cope with the effects of climate change.

13. The greatest political challenge would lie in allocating resources and reaching consensus at the international level. However, the challenges arising from climate change would not be addressed by policy alone; business leaders and civil society must also contribute. While technology could clearly play an immediate role in the context of climate change and energy transition, he wondered how it could help to address the broader challenges.

14. **Mr. Recht** (Chief Executive Officer of Solute Inc. and Senior Engineer of Otherlab), panellist, accompanying his statement with a digital slide presentation, said that technology could make it easier to deploy the right solutions, but it could not generate the will to do so. Resilience consisted of three categories: changing human behaviour in response to crises, improving existing infrastructure, and building new and different infrastructure. The inventors at Otherlab focused on the latter, in an effort to make

resilient inventions. For example, with regard to renewable energy technologies, the Makani kite was a flying wind turbine with the wingspan of a jumbo jet, designed to sit in the jet stream and fly continuously at an 8[illegible] barrel roll to generate wind. During a storm, it could land and be out of danger. The company Sunfolding, an offshoot of Otherlab, had replaced the metal racking on the back of solar panels with compressed air bellows to allow the panels to lie flat during a storm. In both of those examples, heavy, stiff objects were replaced with light and flexible ones that would be cheaper and easier to deploy. To facilitate the production of those inventions, Otherlab had replaced heavy, energy-intensive steel robot arms with inflatable robots that were safe, easy to use, cheaper and more efficient. The new robots also allowed for human-centred manufacturing, in which machines and people could work together. Nevertheless, the inventors at Otherlab could only provide their best, newest inventions; it was up to the international community to implement them.

15. **Mr. Porter** (Journalist and book author) wondered how the international community could ensure inclusive responses in combating rising inequality in the global economy.

16. **Ms. Patel** (Founding Director of the Society for Promotion of Area Resource Centres and Chair, Slum/Shack Dwellers International), panellist, said that the poor women with whom she worked often wondered why companies did not collaborate with the poor to produce items for them. Instead, they were sold out-of-date technology, second-hand furniture and electricity-guzzling equipment.

17. In many developing countries, even in the context of growing urbanization, most policies were focused on increasing rural opportunities to prevent people from moving to the cities. However, climate change and economic distress were driving them to cities, and production facilities were turning villages into towns. Given that very few people owned most of the land and assets, poverty was expanding and impacting multiple generations. Within the framework of the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the international community did not have much time to reach its goals. Governments, civil society organizations and national technology mechanisms were simply not equipped to act on the scale required. As a result, solutions must integrate scalability and leapfrogging. Furthermore, the poor must be treated as partners rather than charity cases or beneficiaries. In the global South, over 50 per cent of the population was under the age of 30 years. Those young people were impatient for progress. They were also globally connected. One in three adolescents in Mumbai had a second-hand smart phone, but had no secure place to stay, formal identity or direct access to drinking water, sanitation or electricity.

18. Her organization worked to create federations of the urban poor in order to build their capacity to partner with private-sector institutions, non-governmental organizations, Governments and cities. In approximately 60 to 80 per cent of cities in developing countries, the people were not formally counted and did not have official identities or access to services. The majority of people who required assistance worked outside of formal institutions. She therefore called on all States to acknowledge the informal labour market and provide those people with an identity, as their active participation was essential to fulfilling international commitments. Furthermore, States must abandon the artificial urban-rural divide. Every person in urban areas in Nepal, India and South Asia contributed significantly to their kinship groups in rural areas.

19. The international community must also seek new methods and partnerships to implement timely solutions. Unfortunately, it did not currently have the mindset to do so. Representatives of national Governments still relied on eighteenth- and nineteenth-century models that portrayed poor people as a threat to cities and focused on sending them back to rural areas. To build resilience, the international community should look to the poor. Those living in vulnerable areas faced water shortages, flooding or mudslides on a daily or annual basis and had already implemented solutions that relied on cultural and collective behaviour.

20. **Mr. Porter** (Journalist and book author) said that young people would bear the brunt of many of the problems created by older generations. He wondered what new solutions they would bring to old problems, and how they could be motivated to engage and put pressure on Governments.

21. **Ms. Amatya**, speaking on behalf of the major group for children and youth, panellist, said that resilience was a multidimensional concept with social, economic, political and demographic aspects. Sustainability required an inherent capacity for resilience. Individuals, communities, institutions and Governments must be able to prevent and recover from risks and hazards, adapt to change and build back better. With technological advancements in digitalization and data innovation, key stakeholders must encourage youth engagement in order to be effective. There were 1.8 billion young people in the world, over 85 per cent of whom lived in developing countries. Young people

had the potential and the willingness to be agents of change and bring about transformative and disruptive solutions. They were driven to find innovative solutions and adapt to uncertainties.

22. The approach to resilience must be sociocultural, socioeconomic and human rights-based. It should also take into consideration the rights of the planet. Education was a critical factor, in particular education for sustainable development. The international community must therefore invest in building stronger educational infrastructures, improving teaching methods, integrating technology and innovation in education and promoting lifelong learning. It must also support and invest in capacity-building for young people and youth-led organizations, especially at the grass-roots level, with a view to raising awareness of the importance of youth civic engagement, social transparency, local governance and innovative development solutions. Strategic and influential leadership at all levels, as well as intergenerational partnerships, would be crucial to that end.

23. Young people must be meaningfully engaged through proper outreach and advocacy. Governments must identify entry points in local sectors and mainstream youth issues in all stages of development planning. Additionally, young people must be included in policymaking. Engagement platforms, such as social media, information and communications technologies (ICTs), new mobile technologies and crowdsourcing, had proven to be effective tools for advocacy, outreach and resilience. For example, after the 2015 earthquake in Nepal, the country's young people had leveraged technology and innovation across engagement platforms to conduct open data mapping, raise funds and mobilize other young people around the world. Those engagement platforms must be further utilized and adapted to specific contexts.

24. Young people had played a key role in formulating a number of international policies. For example, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 formally established that young people were agents of change and should be given the space and modalities to contribute to disaster risk reduction, in accordance with legislation, national practice and educational curricula. Security Council resolution 2250 (2015) recognized the important contribution that young people made to peacebuilding, and the 2030 Agenda emphasized the critical role that they could play in the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. However, the progress made in establishing those policies would be meaningless if Member States did not incorporate them in their national policies and plans.

25. Perhaps the biggest challenge would be to sustain the progress that had been made. There must be a shift from reactive to proactive approaches and from short-term solutions to long-term, sustainable development gains. One of the barriers to meaningful youth engagement was the lack of dedicated resources. The international community should therefore prioritize youth-sensitive budgeting for youth issues, especially in the context of government fiscal planning. It must also promote the participation of excluded and vulnerable young people, as well as women and girls. Without inclusivity, achieving the Sustainable Development Goals would be a distant dream, and if the international community did not capitalize on the willpower of young people, the demographic dividend would become a demographic disaster.

26. **Mr. Porter** (Journalist and book author) asked what urgent actions the international community, Governments and the private sector should be taking, what were the potential trade-offs, and how Governments and businesses could balance the need for development with the need for climate mitigation.

27. **Mr. Recht** (Chief Executive Officer of Volute Inc. and Senior Engineer of Otherlab) said that, from a technical perspective, Governments and private businesses should focus on supplying electric power; installing wind, solar and nuclear capacity; and providing as much funding for innovation as possible. They should make decisions that looked to the future, such as building the foundations for facilitating future clean energy projects and avoiding coal power plants. They should also identify and break down barriers to such projects.

28. **Ms. Amatya**, speaking on behalf of the major group for children and youth, said that the international community must take an integrated, cross-sectoral, multi-stakeholder, sustainable approach to science and technology, and promote increased investment at all levels. Innovative solutions must be contextualized to meet the specific needs of local communities, and decision-making should be evidence-based and demand-driven. In order to ensure resilient and sustainable societies, the United Nations should promote coherence among the science and technology frameworks across the Organization with a view to establishing more robust science and technology road maps at the national level. The Council should continue to facilitate knowledge-sharing among United Nations entities, Member States, civil society and other stakeholders.

29. **Ms. Patel** (Founding Director of the Society for Promotion of Area Resource Centres and Chair of Slum/Shack Dwellers International) said that the real

challenge was fulfilling global commitments and aspirations at the local level. The urban poor and their social movements must build their own capacity to begin constructive dialogues with technology providers, government agencies and local governments. Her organization and the network of Slum/Shack Dwellers International promoted partnerships at the local level between groups that had generally been at odds, such as the construction industry and slum dwellers who constantly fought over evictions.

30. At the international level, municipal associations felt the same sense of disenfranchisement as the urban poor. They constantly sought greater resources to assist their constituencies, both formal and informal, but were constrained by national policies in providing that assistance. Groundbreaking technology and sweeping commitments would fall flat without successful implementation at the local level.

31. **Mr. Aguirre Vacchieri** (Chile) welcomed the presence of a panellist representing the technological aspects of resilience, in addition to the political and social aspects. Given that public-private partnerships were fundamental to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, he asked the panellists what their organizations had done to collaborate with their respective counterparts in the other sector.

32. **Ms. Patel** (Founding Director of the Society for Promotion of Area Resource Centres and Chair of Slum/Shack Dwellers International) said that, in the global South, most of the infrastructure was constructed by private-sector companies. In 80 per cent of those projects, a significant number of poor people were evicted. Slum/Shack Dwellers International had therefore begun a dialogue with the 15 major engineering companies operating in the global South to change the way in which they mapped locations for building infrastructure and to ensure that inhabitants without identities were counted and taken into account. At the same time, the organization called on Governments to change their tender processes and undertake critical public infrastructure projects in a way that did not destroy the lives of some to provide benefits to others. Slum/Shack Dwellers International also collaborated with private-sector companies, Governments and associations of municipalities at the national and international levels.

33. Until 2017, non-governmental organizations in the global South had been unaware that there were different generations of solar panels, and much of what they had received had stopped functioning after a short period of time. They were now trying to reach out to private-sector companies to develop products with them jointly. Collaboration was also important to ensure that items could be adapted to different cultures. For example, beautiful cookstoves designed for cooking in the North were given to poor women in the South unable to use them, which was a waste of quality investments.

34. **Mr. Recht** (Chief Executive Officer of Volute Inc. and Senior Engineer of Otherlab) said that Otherlab tried to maintain a connection to the developing world by inventing technology designed for people who were not served by the traditional United States innovation system. Such inventions included inflatable structures that could be deployed inexpensively to allow nurses and doctors to quarantine patients, as well as cardboard aircraft that could be dropped from an airplane and deliver relief supplies to a precise target. He encouraged the international community to approach Otherlab with projects and problems. The inventors loved challenges and wished to stay connected to the public sector. Within the developed world, particularly in the United States, it was easy to stay connected to the Government because of its involvement in research. However, Otherlab had to make a concerted effort to reach others.

35. **Ms. Sindi** (Observer for the Islamic Development Bank) said that resilience also depended on integrating indigenous knowledge into science, technology and innovation. Indigenous communities relied on ancestral knowledge to survive in very harsh conditions, such as famine, drought, flooding, earthquakes and outbreaks of infectious disease. Furthermore, the values, traditions and religions of indigenous peoples must be taken into consideration to provide them with the necessary tools and information to strengthen their resiliency. In the developing world in particular, indigenous communities were most impacted by food crises and outbreaks of disease. The 10-member group to support the Technology Facilitation Mechanism had concluded that indigenous knowledge should be integrated into society. She wished to know how the international community could promote indigenous knowledge and encourage the establishment of research centres in that regard.

36. **Mr. Recht** (Chief Executive Officer of Volute Inc. and Senior Engineer of Otherlab) said that the most immediate thing that a technologist could do was to listen. In the 1950s, the paradigm of research was to invent a solution and then look for the problem. Since then, researchers had learned to listen. Most of the technology companies in California, in the United States, employed ethnographers who went into the field to analyse the needs of people. That trend would help to find indigenous knowledge and reflect it in technical solutions.

37. **Ms. Amatya**, speaking on behalf of the major group for children and youth, said that it was important to link local indigenous knowledge to modern technology in building resilient systems for society. Innovative solutions that used modern technology must be context-specific. In particular, indigenous and local knowledge had played an important role in early warning systems and risk assessment. The culture, diversity and experiences of local and indigenous peoples must be incorporated into policy and planning, as well as public-private partnerships.

38. **Ms. Patel** (Founding Director of the Society for Promotion of Area Resource Centres and Chair of Slum/Shack Dwellers International) said that intergenerational knowledge carried by women and diversity within poor communities were celebrated in her work. Her organization challenged the poor to demand to be recognized and to be more than beneficiaries and consumers of development. Mutual respect was vital to collaboration that incorporated technology and local knowledge. Currently, there were not enough cultural protocols in place to make that happen. The ideas of empowerment and participation were frequently discussed but rarely benefited the poor. The international community could not afford to wait another decade to develop those relationships.

39. **Ms. Wynhoven** (International Telecommunication Union) said that technology could be a key tool for resilience and sustainability, but gender divides often impacted access to technology and skill acquisition for women and girls. Given that achieving the Sustainable Development Goals would require their full participation, she asked the panellists to share lessons learned in addressing those barriers.

40. **Mr. Recht** (Chief Executive Officer of Volute Inc. and Senior Engineer of Otherlab) said that Otherlab had a number of female leaders. For example, Danielle Applestone had founded Other Machine Co., which had made a low-cost, computer-controlled milling machine with a view to democratizing manufacturing. As a female engineer, she had considered how to increase access to manufacturing tools for a more diverse population. Female technical leadership at the outset had allowed that technology to reach women and girls. The process of bringing technology across the gender divide must start with promoting the technical education and leadership of women and girls.

41. **Ms. Patel** (Founding Director of the Society for Promotion of Area Resource Centres and Chair of Slum/Shack Dwellers International) invited those in attendance to consider what actions their Governments and networks could take to produce the transformation that was desperately needed at the local level so that the role and contribution of young people, women and the urban poor was duly recognized.

42. **Ms. Amatya**, speaking on behalf of the major group for children and youth, said that sustainable development and resilience could not be viewed as two separate goals. Resilience was crucial to the success and sustainability of development efforts. Youth must be at the centre of those initiatives, as the involvement of young people was paramount to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Attention should therefore be given to building resilience and empowering youth.

43. **Mr. Recht** (Chief Executive Officer of Volute Inc. and Senior Engineer of Otherlab) said that the international community must recognize the value of research conducted by small organizations and companies in the developed and developing world. In the United States and Europe, research was centred around large universities, research centres and capital investments. However, it had become clear in the past two decades that 20 people in a garage could accomplish the same results. States with a small national budget might not be able to afford a national lab, but they could afford to fund small-scale, simple research efforts.

44. **Mr. Porter** (Journalist and book author) said that he wrote about resilience in the context of the United States, which was smaller and more cohesive and had more resources than the world as a whole. He was discouraged by the difficulties that the United States encountered in mobilizing resources to address imminent problems and expressed concern about the ability of the international community to do the same. He therefore urged those in attendance not to be complacent. Although formally establishing global goals and timetables was an important part of the process, it was also the easiest part. In implementing policies to achieve those goals, Governments would anger or hurt some constituencies and make politically difficult trade-offs. On the other hand, the world had faced significant challenges in the past and had demonstrated enormous resilience in other contexts.

45. *A video presentation entitled "Climate change in Fiji in virtual reality: our home, our people" was shown.*

*Session 1: Panel discussion on "Resilience decoded — building blocks towards 2030"*

46. **Mr. Carvalho Pinheiro** (Special Representative to the United Nations and Director of the International Labour Organization Office in New York), moderator, said that it was important to understand the difference between resistance and resilience. Resistance focused

on defeating the impact of a disaster or disturbance and resuming normal operations afterwards, while resilience focused on limiting the impact of the event, absorbing it and adapting the system to respond. The concept of resilience had first been introduced in the natural sciences and then translated to the social sciences, information technology and business. In the context of ecology, resilience referred to the capacity of an ecosystem to maintain its fundamental structure, process and functioning when subjected to stress, disturbance or invaders. The concept was relatively new for the United Nations, but was included in the 2030 Agenda, where it was mentioned in relation to refugees, disasters, climate change, poverty reduction and marine and coastal ecosystems. The International Labour Organization discussed resilience in terms of employment, decent work and peace. Resilience also featured in discussions concerning the transition to a greener economy, moving from fossil fuels to a more sustainable path; social protection, empowering people to be resilient to shocks; and labour markets and the future of work, increasing resilience to changes in technology. It would be helpful to discuss the main risks that communities were facing at the local, national and regional levels and what could be done to address them.

47. **Ms. Mucavi** (Director of the Food and Agriculture Organization Liaison Office in New York), panellist, said that people around the world were increasingly exposed to natural hazards and crises, which were having devastating consequences on food security. According to the 2018 Global Report on Food Crises released by the Food Security Information Network, the number of people suffering from acute hunger had increased from 108 million in 2016 to 124 million in 2017. The main drivers of acute food insecurity were conflicts and climate shocks. In the last seven years, an average of 22.5 million people had been displaced each year by climate-related disasters, most often from flooding and storms. Unfortunately, climate-related disasters were expected to intensify further. According to The State of Food and Agriculture, issued by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in 2016, an additional 35 million to 122 million people could be living in extreme poverty by 2030 as a result of climate change.

48. Despite increasing urbanization, approximately 75 per cent of the world's poor lived in rural areas. They derived their livelihoods, labour income and food primarily from agriculture. A poor rural family might be able to withstand drought for a time, but recurring drought would make recovery difficult. At a certain point, negative coping strategies, such as selling their productive assets, might be required. The international community must therefore scale up prevention interventions. A number of studies had confirmed that it was four to seven times more cost-effective to invest in disaster risk reduction than to rely on emergency responses. There was an urgent need to strengthen the resilience of households, communities, institutions and ecosystems in order to more effectively address the threats and disasters that impacted agriculture, food security and nutrition.

49. **Mr. Carvalho Pinheiro** (Special Representative to the United Nations and Director of the International Labour Organization Office in New York) said that it was important to emphasize prevention and adopt an approach to cope with the results of a disaster. With regard to urban areas, he asked how smart cities could contribute to adaptation and resilience.

50. **Ms. Datta** (Reader in Urban Futures at King's College London), panellist, accompanying her statement with a digital slide presentation, said that the international community must critically assess its approach to implementing smart technologies in existing cities, particularly in the global South, and the impact of those technologies on the everyday lives of the urban poor.

51. A lack of infrastructure, or broken or disconnected infrastructures, had a very real impact on the lives of marginalized and poor communities. Such factors made women more vulnerable, especially when they had to access open land for defecation or public water taps for collecting water. Top-down smart-city policies sought to address related safety issues by asking women to crowdsource data on mobile applications. However, it was important to understand how technology was used in low-income communities: second-hand mobile phones were often unable to download the necessary data and were frequently shared among family members. Nevertheless, women did use their mobile phones to create as an information infrastructure via messaging applications or text messages. They communicated safe or unsafe locations, the location of available infrastructure, when the water would come to the public tap and which public toilets to use.

52. In the context of resilience, there must be deeper reflection and critical assessment of top-down policies and initiatives in order to understand their limitations. Smart-city agendas must mainstream gender vulnerability and be aligned with the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the Sustainable Development Goals. Policymakers must move beyond providing digital skills and literacy, and seek to understand the financial, economic, social, institutional and structural constraints that women faced when using technology to access safe spaces and infrastructure.

53. Resilience was not an inherent quality of communities, but rather emerged from the failure of local, national and international policies to cater to their needs. Safety must be seen as a necessity, not as a by-product of resilience, and the possibility of establishing the right to a smart city should be given consideration. Furthermore, resilience should be decoded along multiple axes of vulnerabilities, including gender, age, disability and class.

54. **Mr. Carvalho Pinheiro** (Special Representative to the United Nations and Director of the International Labour Organization Office in New York) asked how psychology could help to accelerate the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

55. **Ms. Jaipal** (Main Representative of the American Psychological Association at the United Nations and Professor Emeritus at the Cross-cultural Psychology Center for Cultures and Communication and Alternative Visions for the Future, Bloomfield College), panellist, accompanying her statement with a digital slide presentation, said that psychological resilience consisted of a number of behaviours and actions, such as problem-solving, self-confidence, emotion regulation, motivation to succeed, meaning-making and viewing change as a challenge or opportunity. Those qualities developed from external factors, such as supportive parents or caregivers; close relationships with peers, extended family or communities; effective community schools and neighbourhoods; and qualities of faith and hope embedded in spiritual and cultural beliefs. The core of resilience was a strong sense of identity, based on cultural or social values and norms. Strong relationships and social support networks were therefore paramount to building resilience. Risk factors for resilience included the erosion of social relationships, community bonds, cultural or social identity and self-confidence, as well as deprivations affecting early childhood development, such as inadequate nutrition, ineffective schooling and impoverished neighbourhoods.

56. According to the World Health Organization, mental health problems and suicide were the second leading cause of death for young adults between the ages of 15 and 29 years. Low- and middle-income countries had the highest rates of youth suicide globally. In 2014, the United States suicide rate had reached the highest level in nearly 30 years. In the United Kingdom, girls aged 10 to 15 years had been unhappier with their lives and appearances in 2014 than they had been five years earlier, and rates of anxiety and depression in young people had risen by 70 per cent in the past 25 years. The rising rates of youth mental health problems and suicide around the world suggested that the current model of development was unsustainable and could be creating new risk factors for resilience.

57. There was a growing body of research on the effects of ICT on cognitive and social functioning for children and adolescents. The use of electronic media was associated with poorer memory and cognitive performance, faster and less accurate responses, delayed bedtime and shorter sleep time. Sleep deprivation had long-term effects on adolescent mental health. Insomnia symptoms were associated with the use of alcohol and drugs, depression and suicide ideation and attempts. The use of ICT also seemed to be eroding self-confidence. Surveys in Europe and the United States had found that the use of social media for people aged 18 to 34 years had been associated with depression, anxiety and feelings of inadequacy and unattractiveness. The use of Facebook was significantly related to decreases in well-being, especially for women and groups with little education and low income. Moderate to heavy use of social media, especially Instagram and Snapchat, was also linked to increased rates of anxiety, depression, poor sleep, loneliness and isolation in youth.

58. Additional risks facing young people from the use of ICT included a distorted view of reality, sexting, revenge porn, cyberbullying and privacy issues. At a recent side event organized by the Commission on the Status of Women, representatives of developed countries had spoken exclusively about digital damage, online violence against girls, trauma from cyberbullying, mental health problems and suicide, whereas those from developing countries had presented science, technology, engineering and mathematics education programmes and technologies as a means of promoting the economic empowerment of rural girls.

59. Acculturation stress referred to psychological changes that occurred with culture contact and could vary in intensity. Consumer culture values spreading through electronic media were eroding traditional values and seemed to be causing acculturation stress, especially for vulnerable or marginalized populations in low- and middle-income countries. When cultures with conflicting norms and values came together, it could cause identity confusion and anxiety. Given that culture contact was inevitable, it must be addressed in a way that promoted health, especially for young people. Recent findings from India on the mental health of high school and college students had found that increased pressure to assimilate to a consumer culture led to higher the levels of anxiety, depression and family conflict.

60. Access to the Internet and electronic media was one of the most important factors in development, but it

could come with unanticipated costs to youth mental health in both developed and developing countries. In order to combat those new risk factors, it was important to raise public awareness about the possible risks of ICT usage; include warning labels on ICT products, especially for young children; raise awareness among parents about the effects of mobile phone and social media use on children; teach safe social media use in schools; and introduce heavy usage pop-up warnings on social media sites. Consumer protection bureaux must assess the costs and benefits of new devices before they were mass-marketed, especially to children. Schools and universities should teach critical thinking about consumer culture and incorporate diversity training in curricula. There should be integration policies for ethnic minorities, migrants and refugees that protected the cultural identity of both the incoming and host cultures. Community-building programmes should strengthen community bonds in neighbourhoods and schools. Support should be provided to parents and caretakers to ensure healthy early childhood development. Finally, the costs as well as the benefits of technology must be assessed, and more research needed to be conducted on its effects on resilience.

61. **Mr. Carvalho Pinheiro** (Special Representative to the United Nations and Director of the International Labour Organization Office in New York) wondered how the international community could address the needs of those left furthest behind.

62. **Ms. Bartha** (Senior Advisor at the International Disability Alliance), panellist, delivering her statement on behalf of Together 2030, said that Together 2030 was a global action-oriented initiative to generate and share knowledge on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda that brought together civil society stakeholders from around the world. Resilience was essential to sustainable development and should not be viewed in isolation. The integrated and holistic approach outlined in the Sustainable Development Goals was critical to strengthening resilience. Building resilient societies required a transformative shift that could not be limited simply to the built environment but must also be based on the right to life and the right to be included. As such, resilient societies must be founded on respect for inherent dignity; non-discrimination; full, effective and meaningful participation; equal opportunities; accessibility; partnerships; gender equality; and the rights of children and older persons.

63. One of the key risks to the resilience of individuals and communities was a lack of empowerment, as they were denied a voice in critical decision-making. Governments and other key stakeholders often lacked the knowledge and will to provide appropriate forums for inclusive participation. Vulnerable and marginalized groups must be included in planning, implementing and monitoring policies. Barriers to active participation must be removed, and capacity-building programmes must be enhanced. For example, in order to include persons with disabilities in meaningful dialogue, venues must be accessible for wheelchair users and provide sign language interpreters, braille materials and closed captioning. Technology must also be accessible to persons with disabilities.

64. Together 2030 had conducted a mapping to assess the factors that impacted civil society participation. Given the lack of reliable monitoring and non-traditional data, people living in poverty and vulnerable groups were not being represented. Studies prepared for the voluntary national reviews presented during the 2017 high-level political forum on sustainable development had found that only 14 countries had noted the availability of data for leaving no one behind, and 11 countries had noted a lack of disaggregated data. It was therefore impossible to know who was being left behind or why. The messages of the Sustainable Development Goals often failed to reach people at the grass-roots level. The 2030 Agenda must therefore be incorporated at the subnational and local levels, and national aspirations and advocacy must be connected to the work at the regional and international levels.

65. **Ms. Fukuda-Parr** (Professor of International Affairs at The New School for Social Research and Vice-Chair of the twentieth session of the Committee for Development Policy), discussant, said that technological innovations must serve the needs of the poor, facilitate inclusive development and be tailored to address the priorities of the 2030 Agenda. However, the international community must realize that some fundamental systems were creating winners and losers, as well as gaps in technological progress. While the market was stimulated by investments in research and development, it was unable to ensure that technological developments met the needs of those who were not meaningful market actors. That issue could be overcome by private initiatives, social entrepreneurship and Governments. The intellectual monopolies created by patents, which served to incentivize private investment, could also be a significant obstacle to access to technological breakthroughs and were increasingly embedded in multilateral and plurilateral trade agreements. International investment and trade rules could sometimes be at odds with the principles of human rights. Urgent action must therefore be taken to ensure that technology and innovation targeted the economic, social and environmental needs of those left furthest behind, in particular with regard to medical innovation,

green energy and technology, and food technology. Additionally, States must work together to mobilize financing for priority technological development.

66. The Committee for Development Policy would be recommending a record number of least developed countries for graduation. However, countries that graduated remained vulnerable and still required a great deal of support. New measures were needed to increase support for graduated countries, especially those that were highly vulnerable to environmental threats and economic shocks.

67. **Mr. Keane** (Rapporteur of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues), discussant, said that, in order for individuals and societies to be resilient, they must know their place in the world. The theme of the seventeenth session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues had been "Indigenous peoples' collective rights to lands, territories and resources", and 1,400 indigenous peoples had attended.

68. All the Sustainable Development Goals impacted indigenous peoples, who served as the best example of resilience. They had been victims of extermination attempts and genocide and, for many years, they had been considered obstacles to Western notions of progress and development. Nevertheless, they were reaching out to dominant societies and asking to collaborate because they had a great deal to offer. In terms of development indicators, indigenous peoples lagged behind the rest of society in every State in which they lived. In order to leave no one behind, the international community must address issues of concern to indigenous peoples and ensure their active participation in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Efforts to reach the Millennium Development Goals had shown that what appeared to be progress on paper could sometimes have regressive effects. For example, in a number of States, incomes had increased above the poverty level, to the detriment of indigenous peoples. While indigenous people might have been able to find jobs at new plantations, the loss of their land meant that they no longer had access to clean water or sufficient food, and their quality of life had significantly decreased. Therefore, indigenous peoples must play a role in implementing the 2030 Agenda.

69. While technology could assist in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, political decisions on topics such as land rights would also be required. The ecological and climate stability of the planet depended on maintaining the integrity of existing large ecosystems, which only existed where indigenous peoples had managed to maintain control of their territories, through their resilience.

70. Indigenous knowledge could play a significant role in addressing many global challenges. The Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues sought to create a space for the voices of indigenous peoples within the United Nations system. The international community must further determine how to create those spaces in governance structures and decision-making processes in the context of the 2030 Agenda. For example, the United States Government Arctic policy recognized that the indigenous peoples living in the Arctic had a key role to play in its protection. The international community must also consider how to create spaces for indigenous models of development and indigenous economies, which were based on reciprocity with nature rather than its exploitation. Indigenous peoples had long been practising resilience, and there was a great deal to learn from them.

71. **Mr. Carvalho Pinheiro** (Special Representative to the United Nations and Director of the International Labour Organization Office in New York) asked how the Food and Agriculture Organization was integrating resilience with a view to accelerating the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

72. **Ms. Mucavi** (Director of the Food and Agriculture Organization Liaison Office in New York) said that the Food and Agriculture Organization sought to increase the resilience of livelihoods to threats and crises that affected agriculture, food and nutrition, and, in particular, natural hazards and related disasters, threats to the food chain and food safety, and conflicts and protracted crises. Strengthening rural resilience required political will and an understanding of the risks. Technical expertise was also needed to promote research, capacity-building and innovation in agricultural systems. Furthermore, action must be taken at all levels to strengthen national capacities for risk and crisis management and risk governance for agriculture, food security and nutrition; to improve risk analysis, risk information management and early warning systems; to apply risk-reduction and conflict-sensitive measures; and to establish effective local, national and international emergency preparedness and response.

73. Under the leadership of the United Nations Development Programme, the Food and Agriculture Organization was working with other United Nations entities to prepare a system-wide analytical framework on risk and resilience, with a view to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Reform of the United Nations development system was built on existing experiences and resilience initiatives. It embraced a bottom-up approach and provided pragmatic guidance to United Nations country teams. There must be greater coherence in resilience-building efforts, as resilience

was key to mitigating the impacts of climate change and was urgently needed in rural areas.

74. **Mr. Carvalho Pinheiro** (Special Representative to the United Nations and Director of the International Labour Organization Office in New York) asked how to move from resistance to resilience while absorbing the impacts of ICTs, particularly on young people, and what results had been seen in urban spaces.

75. **Ms. Jaipal** (Main Representative of the American Psychological Association at the United Nations and Professor Emeritus at the Cross-cultural Psychology Center for Cultures and Communication and Alternative Visions for the Future, Bloomfield College) said that her immediate reaction to the data concerning the mental health problems created by ICTs had been one of resistance. The impact of technology on young people gave cause for concern, and they should not adapt to its negative effects. However, in terms of resilience, young people were already addressing those impacts and finding interesting solutions to protect themselves. For example, one young girl had developed an application that gave users the opportunity to reconsider posting offensive messages. In terms of resistance, the international community should demand change from corporations that profited from ICTs. Cross-cultural psychology studied how individuals were connected and embedded in their environments and cultures in a socioeconomic context, and sustainable development was very dependent upon those connections.

76. **Ms. Datta** (Reader in Urban Futures at King's College London) said that resilience was not a new concept. Rural migrants needed to be resilient long before they arrived in urban settings. In the course of her research, conducted in India over 15 years earlier, she had found that resilience had been deeply embedded in everyday lives and exchanges, as well as in survival skills. In order to be resilient, marginal communities must acquire knowledge and information to build the capacity to cope with structural, social, political or economic constraints. For example, slum and squatter communities needed to understand legal policies and statutes so that they could adequately respond to evictions and use the law to argue for their right to the city.

77. Resilience also required an understanding of where vulnerabilities emerged and how to address them. For example, gender-based violence had been societally and generationally internalized, and a number of women felt that violence in the home was normal or legitimate. Grass-roots groups in India had created a website to compile a list of the hate crimes reported by the media, thereby creating an informational infrastructure that allowed people to understand what was happening and contextualize their experiences. Strengthening resilience would also require increasing data security, enacting privacy laws and urgently addressing cyberviolence against women. In conclusion, resilience was not limited to communities overcoming obstacles; it also involved large-scale policies that allowed communities to address vulnerabilities.

78. **Mr. Carvalho Pinheiro** (Special Representative to the United Nations and Director of the International Labour Organization Office in New York) asked what resilience meant in the context of persons with disabilities.

79. **Ms. Bartha** (Senior Advisor at the International Disability Alliance) said that persons with disabilities were the most vulnerable in society. Even among that community, there were marginalized groups, such as women or indigenous peoples, who faced multiple discrimination. In some societies, children with disabilities were abused, often forced to work in the circus, used for labour or hidden away by their families. Discrimination was one of the biggest barriers to participation. In order to overcome stigma and be resilient, persons with disabilities must participate effectively in decision-making and the development of policies and programmes. They must also be involved in collecting data, which should be disaggregated to identify a number of factors. If the international community was not aware of who was being left behind, it would be impossible to address gaps in policies, programmes and projects that were designed to implement the 2030 Agenda.

80. **Mr. Carvalho Pinheiro** (Special Representative to the United Nations and Director of the International Labour Organization Office in New York) said that, while the concept of resilience was well established in the natural sciences and in environmental contexts, there was some resistance to integrating resilience into the social sciences and the field of development. Some argued that discussing resilience distracted from efforts to address the root causes of social issues.

81. **Ms. Fukuda-Parr** (Professor of International Affairs at The New School for Social Research and Vice-Chair of the twentieth session of the Committee for Development Policy) said that there were always walls between disciplines. The development field had been focused on forward progress, downside risk and threats to human well-being. There had not been much consideration for the idea that progress and regression could occur simultaneously, perhaps due to the development field's rigid approach to social issues. Universities such as The New School for Social

Research always sought to challenge conventional thinking, and the Sustainable Development Goals had introduced the idea that progress was not linear and could not rely on simple linear solutions. Much of the analysis in the field of development and poverty reduction was carried out to provide evidence-based solutions. Practitioners seemed to recognize the need for tailored, multidimensional solutions. However, the research and theoretical bases continued to resist that logic.

82. **Mr. Carvalho Pinheiro** (Special Representative to the United Nations and Director of the International Labour Organization Office in New York) said that he would be interested to hear how resilience had served indigenous peoples.

83. **Mr. Keane** (Rapporteur, Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues) said that the level of involvement of indigenous peoples at the international level was a sign of their resilience. There had not been significant conversations between international development institutions and indigenous peoples until 1992, when they had worked to incorporate their concerns into the documents and agreements stemming from the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. At that time, they were referred to as indigenous populations or communities, rather than indigenous peoples. They were now represented by a Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples, the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. It was no longer uncommon to discuss the role of indigenous peoples in solving the social, economic and environmental issues that the world was facing. Their participation in realizing the Sustainable Development Goals would do more than simply allow them to continue to exist as distinct peoples; it would also benefit the rest of the world.

84. The year 2019 would be the International Year of Indigenous Languages. Every two weeks, one indigenous language disappeared. The health of a language was the best indicator of the health of an ecosystem and its biodiversity. Every time one of those languages disappeared, the world lost ecological, economic, biological and medicinal knowledge that was just beginning to be understood.

*The meeting rose at 1 p.m.*

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# Economic and Social Council

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Integration segment

**Summary record of the 21st meeting**
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 1 May 2018, at 3 p.m.

*President*: Mr. Matjila (Vice-President) ..... (South Africa)

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*General discussion on the theme "Innovative communities: leveraging technology and innovation to build sustainable and resilient societies"*

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*In the absence of Ms. Chatardova (Czechia), Mr. Matjila (South Africa), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

*The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.*

**Agenda item 8: Integration segment** (*continued*)

*Session 2: Panel discussion on "Technology and disaster risk reduction"*

1. **Ms. Grignon** (Deputy Permanent Representative of Kenya to the United Nations and Vice-Chair of the Commission on the Status of Women at its sixty-second session), moderator, said that natural disasters and extreme weather events threatened the survival of communities around the world. Such events, which were exacerbated by climate change, had a detrimental effect on human health, biodiversity and economic activity, and placed significant stress on national institutional systems.

2. According to a report produced by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) entitled "Turning Promises into Action: Gender Equality in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", women and children were 14 times as likely as men to die during a disaster. The needs and voices of women and children must be taken into account when designing sustainable disaster risk reduction solutions. The Commission on the Status of Women was concerned that natural disasters and environmental degradation were exacerbating the inequalities and disadvantages faced by women and girls. The Commission was also concerned about the low number of women and girls studying and working in the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

3. Member States, in collaboration with other actors, must take steps to ensure that the planning, delivery and monitoring of disaster risk reduction policies and strategies, including technology-based approaches, were attuned to the needs of women and girls. Women affected by natural disasters must be empowered to participate effectively and on equal terms with men in decision-making and leadership processes. Countries should invest in women and girls and adopt gender-responsive strategies leveraged by technology to reduce vulnerability and increase resilience.

4. The Council was about to hold a panel discussion that would provide an opportunity to exchange lessons learned on the use of technology and innovation in the field of disaster risk reduction. She asked the panellists what specific disaster risk reduction measures had been put in place by States, including in the context of the Technology Facilitation Mechanism and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030. She also asked about national experiences in using technology and innovation to strengthen resilience and inclusion in an integrated and gender-responsive manner.

5. **Mr. Shobʻiyon** (First Deputy Chairman of the Committee of Emergency Situations and Civil Defense, Tajikistan), panellist, said that to ensure the implementation of the Sendai Framework, Tajikistan had created a national disaster risk reduction platform that brought together line ministries and observers from international organizations and donor countries. In addition, the Committee of Emergency Situations and Civil Defense was taking measures to address the four priority areas of the Sendai Framework.

6. An inter-agency working group had been established to develop a disaster risk reduction strategy for 2018–2030. The Government was pleased that international organizations and development partners had contributed to the development of the strategy, as coordinated and coherent international assistance, including capacity-building, was essential to effective disaster risk reduction.

7. Tajikistan was prone to natural disasters such as floods, mudslides, earthquakes, strong winds and rockfalls. Such events, which were exacerbated by climate change, were a threat to biodiversity, economic activity and human life; in 2017, they had caused 300 deaths and millions of dollars' worth of damage. To reduce the country's vulnerability, comprehensive strategies based on the latest technology were needed. Access to timely information, innovative solutions and early warning, prevention and ecosystem protection systems had an important role to play in improving resilience to disasters, particularly in rural and mountainous regions.

8. Tajikistan had had a successful monitoring and early warning system in place for over 50 years. In 2000, the World Bank had spearheaded a project to reduce the impact of landslides using remote sensing technology. In addition, research was being carried out on the formation of hail, which damaged crops. While Tajikistan had an early detection system in place for dangerous weather events, it needed to be modernized. An online platform for technology assistance established as part of efforts to achieve the 2030 Agenda could facilitate the exchange of information and innovative initiatives.

9. The Government was implementing disaster risk reduction projects with the assistance of partners such as the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, United Nations agencies and donor countries, including China, Saudi Arabia and Switzerland. The aim was to improve early warning systems, monitoring and crisis management using the latest information and communications technology (ICT). Tajikistan would

continue to develop technology and innovative mechanisms and to strengthen national and regional institutions and policies in the area of disaster risk reduction, including climate adaptation, training and improved cooperation.

10. **Mr. Jackson** (Executive Director of the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency), panellist, accompanying his statement with a digital slide presentation, said that the Agency's Regional Comprehensive Disaster Management Strategy was an innovative road map intended to bridge the gap between disaster risk reduction and sustainable development. The Strategy was aimed at strengthening institutional arrangements at the national and regional levels, increasing knowledge management, enhancing effectiveness at the sectoral levels, and building community resilience. It had four cross-cutting themes, namely, gender, climate change, environmental sustainability and ICT. While the Strategy had been developed at the regional level, it was implemented nationally through a mechanism intended to ensure that all stakeholders, including civil society, worked together and pooled their resources.

11. To improve disaster resilience, it was essential to provide social protection for the most vulnerable in society, safeguard infrastructure, promote economic diversification, address environmental protection issues and strengthen operational readiness. Recalling that the Agency was mandated to act as a regional clearing house for disaster-related information and research, he said that a virtual platform called the Caribbean Risk Information System had been established to facilitate analysis, research and evidence-based decision-making, and to strengthen risk management and climate change adaptation efforts. In addition to risk management data, the platform contained hazard maps, live monitoring tools, progress indicators and geospatial tools and data sets.

12. The Agency had entered into partnerships with universities and cutting-edge private sector firms to develop initiatives such as Spatial Edge, which provided real-time analysis of cyclones. Efforts were being made to improve information gathering and dissemination using mobile technology, crowdsourcing and online portals. The Agency was also using technology to engage remotely with donors and political actors. As the Agency had limited resources, it had come up with inventive, cost-effective solutions, such as attaching surveillance cameras to airplanes to assess the damage caused by natural disasters. Other initiatives included the Dewetra platform, which integrated various information sources, including sensors and cameras, to improve disaster preparedness, mitigation and response, and CaribViz, which assessed the potential impact of earthquakes. Looking ahead, the Agency would seek to better utilize the Internet of things, blockchain technology, unmanned vehicles, satellite information and artificial intelligence. However, it faced a number of challenges, including political prioritization, financing and capacity distribution.

13. **Ms. Triyanti** (Representative of the Young Scientists in the Science and Technology Advisory Group of the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction for 2017 to 2018), panellist, said that the work of the Science and Technology Advisory Group was intended to support evidence-based policymaking and ensure that science and technology played a role in disaster risk reduction efforts at the global, regional and national levels. While technology could certainly help to improve resilience and ensure sustainable development, rapid technological development could cause economic and environmental damage. She cautioned against seeing technology as a product, rather than a tool, and prioritizing cutting-edge technology over other forms. When applying technological solutions, there was a need to consider whether communities could afford and maintain the technology in question.

14. Education had a key role to play both in the development of new technologies and innovations, and in the communication of such developments to the public. In building capacity, the specific skills needed for technological innovation should be identified. That could be best achieved by acknowledging the interdisciplinary nature of science and encouraging scientists from different fields to work together. In addition, scientists should work with policymakers, young people, women and indigenous communities to gain new perspectives. Intergenerational discussion was particularly crucial.

15. **Mr. Sokona** (Special Advisor on Sustainable Development at the South Centre and Honorary Professor in the Department of Science, Technology, Engineering and Public Policy at University College London), panellist, said that disasters were the result of both natural and human factors, with risk expressed in terms of potential losses of life, assets or income. The central role of technology in disaster risk reduction and management was well established, but technology was a broad concept. There was a tendency to focus on the physical aspects of technology (equipment and infrastructure), but the soft dimensions (planning, knowledge transfer and capacity-building) and the organizational aspects (ownership, institutional arrangements and the sustainability of solutions) were equally important. While institutions tended to operate as silos, the issues they sought to address were cross-sectoral; innovation was therefore essential. Institutions must find a way to bring together local, national and

global policymakers, knowledge-based institutions and universities, and practitioners at all levels, from farmers to ministers.

16. Disaster risk reduction measures should be context specific. The Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, of which he was a Vice-Chair, examined the various technologies used to address extreme weather events, from cutting-edge innovations to local and indigenous solutions, which could be extremely effective. Technical capacity-building, financing, political interest and priority-setting were key. If States focused solely on the physical aspects of technology without taking into consideration the soft and organizational dimensions, they would be left with technology that they could not use effectively. Institutional mechanisms and access to knowledge brokers would be crucial to ensuring that knowledge reached those who needed it.

17. **Mr. Yaakob** (Permanent Representative of Malaysia to the United Nations and Chair of the United Nations Forum on Forests at its thirteenth session), discussant, said that the adoption of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030 had been a milestone for the Forum. The thirteenth session of the Forum would be an important opportunity to promote the implementation of the strategic plan and to provide inputs for the forthcoming session of the high-level political forum on sustainable development, where Sustainable Development Goal 15 would be discussed. At the thirteenth session, the contribution of forests to accelerating the achievement of the Goals and to supporting global efforts to create sustainable and resilient societies would be highlighted.

18. Some 30 per cent of the Earth was covered by forests and 1.6 billion people relied on forests for energy and food. Forests had a key role to play in disaster risk reduction. When sustainably managed, they prevented land degradation and desertification and reduced the risk of flooding and landslides, thereby contributing substantially to climate change mitigation. Target 1.4 of the strategic plan was to strengthen the resilience and adaptive capacity of forests to natural disasters and the impacts of climate change. The question was how to sustainably manage forests. While financial support was important, technology also had a vital role to play, through tools such as satellite imaging, mapping and data gathering.

19. **Mr. Nakona** (Special Advisor on Sustainable Development at the South Centre and Honorary Professor in the Department of Science, Technology, Engineering and Public Policy at University College London) said that forests certainly had an important role to play in preventing land degradation and desertification and in ensuring food security, as recognized by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

20. **Ms. Triyanti** (Representative of the Young Scientists in the Science and Technology Advisory Group of the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction for 2017 to 2018) said that mangrove forests could help to reduce the impact of tsunamis. Such ecosystem-based disaster risk reduction and adaptation methods could be highly effective, but had to be carefully managed to ensure the commitment of local communities.

21. **Mr. Jackson** (Executive Director of the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency) said that there was undoubtedly a correlation between forest cover and the extent of damage after climate change-related events. As many forested areas in the Caribbean were privately owned, Governments needed to engage with local communities and encourage the adoption of ecosystem-based approaches to disaster risk reduction.

22. *A film entitled* Now is the Time to Invest in Resilient Cities *was projected.*

*General discussion on the theme "Innovative communities: leveraging technology and innovation to build sustainable and resilient societies"*

23. **Mr. Edrees** (Observer for Egypt), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, highlighted the importance of policy integration to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, and said that the integration segment of the Economic and Social Council should maintain its role in integrating the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.

24. There was an urgent need to address developing countries' capacity constraints and lack of technology and innovation infrastructure, particularly in the case of the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States. In addition, research capacity in developing countries must be strengthened. Revitalized international cooperation should be aimed at increasing access to clean energy, expanding infrastructure and encouraging the development and transfer of environmentally sound technologies to all developing countries on favourable terms. In that connection, the Technology Bank for the Least Developed Countries must be fully operationalized.

25. Infrastructure, industry and innovation were interlinked and together supported socially inclusive and environmentally sustainable economic development. Poor access to infrastructure hindered development, diversification and value addition, as well as sustainable urbanization. Infrastructure must be climate-sensitive

and resource-efficient, while innovation was key to harnessing countries' economic potential.

26. Access to technology, a powerful driver of economic growth and sustainable development, was unequal both within and among countries. Therefore, it was essential to promote the development and use of information and communications technology and technology infrastructure, and to build capacity, including in support of rapid, universal and affordable access to the Internet.

27. The resilience of cities and human settlements must be boosted to reduce vulnerabilities and the risk of disasters. All stakeholders should support additional efforts to increase access to countries' early warning mechanisms. Recalling the commitments made in the New Urban Agenda, he said that building resilient cities required an enabling environment, which included access to science, technology and innovation; enhanced knowledge-sharing on mutually agreed terms; capacity-building; and financial resources, which must be mobilized at the global, regional and national levels. There was a need for reinvigorated international cooperation and partnerships among all stakeholders, based on the principles of equality, non-discrimination, accountability, respect for human rights and solidarity. Harnessing the potential of science, technology and innovation, closing technology gaps, and scaling up capacity-building at all levels were essential for the shift towards sustainable development and poverty eradication.

28. **Ms. Zahir** (Observer for Maldives), speaking on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), said that small island developing States were highly vulnerable to external shocks, both environmental and economic — such as crises and fluctuations in global markets. Debt service trapped several low- and middle-income countries for decades, restricting their ability to achieve sustainable development. Extreme weather events could reverse decades' worth of development gains; along with drought, ocean degradation, remoteness, limited resources and long-standing debt, they made it difficult for small island developing States to prepare for and respond to disasters.

29. The frameworks and agendas agreed by Member States in recent years provided pathways to addressing those interlinked challenges. The challenge was finding solutions that addressed each country's unique needs, while also recognizing their shared experiences, good practices and priorities. The SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway (SAMOA Pathway) provided a valuable basic framework for action. The midterm review of the SAMOA Pathway, scheduled for 2019, would be a chance to evaluate progress in meeting the needs of small island developing States.

30. Many countries, including small island developing States, still had no access to new technologies, which were critical for strengthening preparedness and reducing risk. The United Nations system and the international community must ensure the funding and means of implementation, as well as partnerships and capacity-building, to improve their access. Better coordination between agencies, and actions guided by the priorities of individual countries would be crucial to that end. Small island developing States needed increased human resource and technical capacity, particularly in the areas of data collection and analysis, as the ability to gather and use relevant baseline data was a prerequisite for investing in smart risk reduction measures. Building sustainable, resilient communities was a necessary, long-term project that required buy-in from all States and industries.

31. **Mr. Gonzalez** (Colombia) said that his country's National Disaster Risk Management System ensured that risk was managed in an orderly, systematic way. The System included a risk management plan, based on five strategic objectives, for providing technical assistance at the local level. Under the plan, 32 departmental risk management funds had been established, local (departmental or municipal) risk management plans had been put in place for 90 per cent of the country and 42 risk management offices had been created. The System incorporated preventive action, including with respect to goods, services, housing and infrastructure, to ensure that new risk situations did not arise. Colombia considered risk management a development issue that was indispensable to the country's sustainability and security.

32. The transfer of technology and knowledge was crucial to sustainable development. Through a national policy on the development of the productive sector, the Government was creating conditions conducive to innovation in production and knowledge and technology transfer. In the medium term, it hoped that the National System for Competitiveness in Science, Technology and Innovation would introduce a model for planning, follow-up and evaluation of policy instruments for productive development.

33. The forthcoming discussions in the integration segment should allow Member States to share their approaches to technology transfer, with a view to the replication of good practices. The resulting acceleration of national strategies should, in turn, contribute to the strengthening of the Technology Facilitation Mechanism and the fulfilment of international technology transfer commitments.

34. **Mr. Viet Dzung Van** (Viet Nam) said that in recent years, climate records had far exceeded predictions, with extreme temperatures and weather conditions causing enormous socioeconomic losses, especially in developing countries, and ever fiercer natural disasters threatening food security, agriculture, access to water, and living standards, ultimately widening inequality. Viet Nam was one of the countries hardest hit by natural disasters, with economic losses of 1.5 times its gross domestic product (GDP) and the number of deaths or missing persons exceeding 300 each year. In Viet Nam, the phenomena of El Niño and La Niña caused severe drought and saline intrusion.

35. As a country that was particularly vulnerable to climate change, Viet Nam attached special importance to common efforts to address it. Viet Nam fully supported the Sendai Framework, the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. His Government had already adopted its national implementation plan for the Paris Agreement and remained committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 8 per cent by 2030. Developed countries should play a leading role in meeting the absolute emissions reduction targets under the Paris Agreement, and should support developing countries in that regard. Viet Nam had incorporated the Sendai Framework into its national plan to deal with natural disasters.

36. International cooperation to address climate change should be enhanced, with a special focus on capacity-building, technology development and access to financial resources, such as the Green Climate Fund. Developing countries must be able to formulate their own development strategies and policy tools, in line with their national circumstances. The United Nations system and other development partners had a crucial role to play in catalysing the structural changes needed to promote awareness, understanding and investment in technology and infrastructure.

37. **Mr. Prongthura** (Observer for Thailand) said that science, technology and innovation were crucial for sustainable development and the construction of resilient societies. The Thailand 4.0 policy was designed to transform the national economy into a knowledge-based, innovation-driven economy, through technological schemes to build resilience such as smart farming, which included the establishment of a smart water operation centre that helped farmers with agricultural planning, and smart cities. Thailand was also using technology and innovation to reduce disaster risk, including through a forest fire application that enabled the general public to provide early warnings of forest fires.

38. Resilience and sustainability must be based on inclusiveness. Local communities could offer unique solutions to many local problems, based on their traditional knowledge, expertise and resources. Governments, the private sector and the international community, including the United Nations, must further empower local communities in that regard.

39. Building resilience began with the right mindset. For more than four decades, Thailand had embraced the sufficiency economy philosophy, a homegrown, people-centred approach to sustainable development. The philosophy encouraged people to live their lives with moderation, reasonableness and prudence, guided by knowledge — including science — and virtue. Through it, individuals, families, communities and nations could become resilient and immune to shocks. The sufficiency economy philosophy had enabled Thailand to weather the 1997 Asian financial crisis and the 2006 Indian Ocean tsunami. Thailand had shared its approach with many countries in Africa and Asia and was keen to partner with more countries. For inclusive sustainable development to become a reality, Member States must all work together to share experiences, continue to invest in science and technology and empower local communities.

40. **Mr. Bermúdez Álvarez** (Uruguay) said that his Government was seeking to adapt its production systems to the information society, a world that was increasingly interconnected and diverse. The National Research and Innovation Agency, established in 2007, was in charge of promoting productive innovation, social innovation and research. Under the Plan Ceibal in the social innovation component, schoolchildren and teachers were provided with personal computers. Although Uruguay had only adopted a strategic approach to innovation in 2005, it was a decisive approach, based on four pillars: reform of the legal framework, reform of its operational regulations, establishment of the National Research and Innovation Agency and the provision of resources. However, that approach suffered from the isolation that affected all developing countries' attempts at cooperation in science, technology and innovation. Promoting an enabling environment for science, technology and innovation as essential tools for sustainable development at the global level required a new level of international cooperation, including official development assistance (ODA).

41. Science, technology and innovation were critical to sustainable development. Development cooperation was needed to provide the capacity, knowledge and technology that would enable transformations in the way people lived. Although Uruguay had experienced a

decade of sustained growth, structural gaps and vulnerabilities remained, and the shift towards a recession in the region compounded the problem. Uruguay also faced a demographic challenge: it had a small, aging population, and, paradoxically, any increase in its GDP had a proportionally high impact on its per capita income, which, worryingly, as of 2017, was the only factor used for determining whether countries were entitled to ODA. Uruguay was also concerned by its categorization as a high-income country, since international development cooperation had supported and continued to support capacity-building for the design and implementation of public policies at the national and local levels, the promotion of human rights and the protection of the environment.

42. Lastly, the Council could provide greater support for initiatives already under way, such as the work of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development to achieve the commitments made at the World Summit on the Information Society, or the creation by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean of a regional digital agenda.

43. **Mr. Duque Estrada Meyer** (Observer for Brazil) said that technology was relevant not only to Sustainable Development Goal 9 on industry, innovation and infrastructure, but to all the Goals. Building the capacity to access and develop science, technology and innovation in developing countries was critical to their overcoming structural economic, social and environmental challenges.

44. The theme of the current integration segment connected technology to Sustainable Development Goals 11 and 13, on sustainable cities and communities, and climate action, respectively. To adapt to the impacts of climate change, foster resilience, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, in line with the Paris Agreement, it was necessary not only to mobilize resources, but also to leverage technological solutions. Technology provided new policy options, enabling countries to achieve the Goals in ways best suited to their specific contexts.

45. The United Nations system could best support technology and innovation initiatives of Member States by strengthening the role of the relevant forums, in particular the multi-stakeholder forum on science, technology and innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals and the Commission on Science and Technology for Development. Development partners should enhance their support to developing countries and work with the private sector in the realm of technology and innovation, in the spirit of Goal 17 on means of implementation.

46. **Ms. Yánez Loza** (Ecuador) said that Ecuador remained committed to the "right to the city" enshrined in the New Urban Agenda, in which Member States had set out their vision of just, safe, healthy, accessible, affordable, resilient and sustainable cities and human settlements to foster prosperity and quality of life for all. Disaster risk reduction and management policies were needed to boost resilience and response capacity vis-à-vis natural and human-caused dangers. Prevention and early warning systems significantly reduced the costs of responding after the event. In April 2018, the Government had published the latest version of the national disaster response plan, which outlined mechanisms for protecting the rights of those affected by natural and human-caused disasters.

47. The development and dissemination of innovations and technologies was a driving force behind economic growth and sustainable development. Ecuador sought to develop smart cities that made use of digital technologies, clean energy technologies, and innovative transport technologies.

48. Ecuador supported research and the exchange of knowledge, and was seeking to increase digital literacy and the use of technology in the public and private spheres for productive transformation and economic development. In 2017, 10.5 per cent of those aged between 15 and 45 had been digitally illiterate and only 58.3 per cent of the population had been Internet users. Despite national efforts, the digital divide was a persistent reality; Ecuador had limited capacity for innovation, connectivity and access to technology. It therefore called on partners to mobilize more resources and implement technology transfers to assist developing countries.

49. **Mr. Bolaji** (Nigeria) said that Nigeria had committed to cooperating with the African Union to advance science, technology and innovation, and to support the development of the skills and competences that would enable Africa to combat poverty and underdevelopment. His Government had established six science centres in the country's six geographical regions in order to stimulate the interest of young people in science-related disciplines, and to integrate policies on science, technology and innovation with a view to enhanced resilience and inclusion within the context of the 2030 Agenda. The science centres also served as platforms for the exchange of best practices on leveraging technology and innovation to build an inclusive, resilient future, and supported national risk management and reduction efforts. However, the absence of critical infrastructure remained an impediment to building resilience. The Government had therefore instituted an annual Technology and Innovation Expo, which brought together inventors, researchers and investors with a view

to commercializing research results, inventions and innovations emerging from the country's research and tertiary institutions.

50. Currently, technology transfer for the benefit of developing countries was not a reality. On the contrary, indigenous technologies were being swindled by manufacturers of more sophisticated copyright- or patent-protected technologies. Further, most developing countries had to cope with illicit financial flows out of their economies, reducing their capacity to put in place the critical infrastructure for the technology and innovation that would support sustainable and resilient societies. International cooperation was desperately needed to provide support for and facilitate access to technology and technological infrastructure.

51. **Ms. Hamdouni** (Morocco) said that the challenges currently facing the world were global in scale, and called for a holistic and, above all, innovative, response. Increasing resilience was a complex process that required a detailed plan, and must begin with collective awareness. Although science, technology and innovation could set the world on the road to sustainability and resilience, developing countries would only be able to use technology effectively when it was accessible to them, at the national and regional levels, and in all sectors. Thus, technical assistance and investment in research and development were essential, along with the adoption of enabling national policies and regulatory frameworks.

52. Morocco believed in cooperative development based on intra-African solidarity; it hoped that through the pooling of means and efforts, South-South cooperation would contribute to the inauguration of a new Africa. Africa was already a laboratory for the digitalized world. Young start-ups in the fields of finance, telecommunications, industry and farming, among others, were driving the change. As the innovators were largely young people with low incomes, that population should be at the heart of public policy.

53. Morocco intended to undertake large-scale infrastructure projects that would comply with international standards, in order to build economic and social resilience. The Government was working towards accelerated achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals by putting new technology and innovation at the centre of its national sustainable development policy. Among the various Moroccan institutes that effectively managed risk were a crisis surveillance centre, under the auspices of the Ministry of the Interior, which managed disasters from a centralized command station, and a spatial remote sensing centre equipped with the latest technology for monitoring and modelling extreme weather events. Morocco continued to make every effort to improve the resilience of its agricultural and energy sectors in the face of climate change through innovative and sustainable solutions, such as the Green Morocco Plan and the national solar energy project, Noor.

54. **Mr. Dewar Viscarra** (Mexico) said that rapid urbanization was becoming a major challenge for Mexico. Access to basic resources such as water, energy, health care, education and other public services was difficult without the infrastructure to cope with the additional pressure resulting from urbanization. Disasters were unpredictable and, without resilient infrastructure, could lead to serious damage and heavy losses. For that reason, Mexico had begun drafting a shared alert protocol, which would enable the competent authorities to spread the alert when disasters threatened.

55. Mexico was also using technology to boost resilience. The Federal Telecommunications Institute had established the minimum technical conditions necessary for public telephone networks offered by different service providers to be interconnected, and mandatory quality standards for mobile service providers. As a result, in the event of a disaster, the telephone network would remain operational and emergency services would be able to provide a rapid and coordinated response. With regard to integration, ongoing reforms of the telecommunications system had increased the number of Mexican homes with Internet access by 20 per cent, and a new national employment portal had already facilitated the placement of 1.8 million persons in productive employment. In addition, the National Council for Science and Technology was bringing indigenous women into the academic and research sector through dedicated fellowships designed to strengthen research in the areas of science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

56. The Council should continue to support the establishment of partnerships that would facilitate the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 9 on infrastructure, industrialization and innovation; Goal 11 on resilient cities and human settlements; and Goal 17 on partnerships for implementation, in particular with bodies such as the International Telecommunication Union, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and the Technology Facilitation Mechanism.

*The meeting rose at 5.25 p.m.*

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27 July 2017–26 July 2018
**Integration segment**

**Summary record of the 22nd meeting**
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 2 May 2018, at 10 a.m.

*President:* Mr. Pecsteen de Buytswerve (Vice-President) ..... (Belgium)

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*In the absence of Ms. Chatardova (Czechia), Mr. Pecsteen de Buytswerve (Belgium), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

*The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.*

**Agenda item 8: Integration segment** (*continued*)

*Session 3: Panel discussion on "Balancing infrastructure development and sustainability"*

1. **The President** said that the current session would address the challenges of sustainable and resilient infrastructure in areas such as health, education, energy, transport, security and public institutions. The discussion would consider the strategies employed by cities and how they related to the national, regional and international levels. It would also highlight the importance of inclusiveness in building resilient societies and address the increasing challenges of citizen security and cybercrime, particularly through the discussion of opportunities and risks related to technology-enabled public services in smart cities.

*Panel 1*

2. **Mr. Shank** (Communications Director of the Carbon Neutral Cities Alliance), moderator, said that the Carbon Neutral Cities Alliance was a global collaboration of cities committed to the most ambitious targets, such as reducing greenhouse gas emissions by as much as 100 per cent by 2050 and achieving 100 per cent renewable energy and zero waste. It would be helpful to discuss the approaches that cities and States had taken to design a resilient and sustainable infrastructure, as well as how they had addressed any challenges. He wondered what role technology-enabled solutions could play and what measures cities could take to secure citizen safety and smart infrastructure. He asked how the conversation could be continued outside of United Nations forums in order to build public will and political will, and called on participants to share good solutions on social media and to tag a member of government, the press, the private sector or civil society. He asked the panellists how they were building public will among their constituencies and changing attitudes and behaviours in order to implement solutions.

3. **Mr. Al-Shawaarbeh** (Mayor of Amman, Jordan), panellist, said that policies should focus on prevention, and cities should build bridges with various sectors, cities, States and international institutions and organizations.

4. Jordan had received millions of refugees from the wars in the Middle East. Migration, both internal and external, was the most significant challenge facing the city of Amman. While city plans had been designed to accommodate natural growth, conflicts in the region had led to extraordinary increases in population. Nevertheless, the city had proven to be capable and resilient enough to accommodate them. With a strong infrastructure that could serve migrants and residents, a city could develop economic projects that would enable the private sector to provide job opportunities.

5. Without long-term planning, the influx of migrants would put pressure on infrastructure in health, education and transport. In order to respond to those socioeconomic challenges, the local government had partnered with international institutions and other cities. In cooperation with the Rockefeller Foundation, it had prepared a resilience strategy, which had been incorporated into city plans and programmes. A three-year master plan had been established to expand the public transport network, and the government had also partnered with the French Development Agency to complete a bus rapid transit system by the end of 2020. In addition, a long-term strategic plan for public transport was being developed, which would promote development while taking into account the needs of passengers. The public transport system would service remote areas of the city, thereby providing job opportunities in those areas, in particular for women, who struggled to move safely around the city. It would also encourage tourism by facilitating travel between tourist sites. Under the resilience strategy, Amman would become a smart city by 2020 and provide all services electronically. The poor would therefore not need to travel to access services, and the increased transparency would improve civic trust. The digital shift would allow the municipality to provide smart solutions to the challenges facing the city.

6. Jordan had limited access to water and energy resources, but its strong, credible political leadership had built bridges with international institutions around the world to exchange experiences and find solutions, which were reflected in the development plans and programmes to serve the city and people of Amman.

7. **Mr. Shank** (Communications Director of the Carbon Neutral Cities Alliance) said that climate change strained water resources. He asked about the concerns surrounding water security and the 15- and 30-year forecast in terms of water availability for Amman, as well as Jordan.

8. **Mr. Al-Shawaarbeh** (Mayor of Amman, Jordan) said that the Ministry of Water and other designated authorities dealt with water security. However, one of the pillars of the resilience strategy dealt with climate change mitigation and adaptation. Although Jordan did

not emit much carbon, it was committed to meeting international standards to adapt to climate change. The Government had adapted the transport network, reduced traffic congestion and increased the use of electricity and renewable energy. It had also increased the number of charging stations to encourage the use of electric cars, especially in the private sector. Amman was currently hosting a conference on smart transport, and the local government was active on social media to allow people to follow the events of the city.

9. **Mr. Williams** (Director of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)), panellist, said that it was important to give greater consideration to challenges to urban resilience beyond that of climate change, for instance rapid urbanization, post-conflict situations and environmental refugees. UN-Habitat focused on urban planning at the national and municipal levels. Because many national policies did not prioritize planning, cities were taking the initiative. The Executive Director of UN-Habitat had held over 150 consultations with Member States, partners, mayors and other stakeholders and had developed a system to classify the urban plans of cities. A number of cities still relied on master plans that had been developed in the 1940s and 1950s, because they lacked the resources, time, energy or means to update their plans. They often had one or two urban planners and a town clerk. Other cities had upgraded their plans in the past five or ten years and had not yet revised them to reflect recent international instruments, such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 or the New Urban Agenda. Those cities sought to upgrade their plans based on new innovations and priorities. Some cities had already updated their plans but did not have the necessary tools to measure progress and were in desperate need of assistance. Other cities had developed new policies and measurement tools but had not yet implemented them, owing to a lack of financing or capacity. Finally, some cities had updated and implemented their plans and measurement tools but had neglected the older parts of the city. In those cases, elements of the smart city only existed in certain parts of the city or in certain areas of municipal authority. A number of cities were also dealing with intense conflicts, post-disaster recovery or significant influxes of migrants; Cox's Bazar in Bangladesh, which had received over 1 million Rohingya refugees in the past year and would soon receive 2 meters of rain from the monsoons, was an example.

10. It was therefore important to tailor resilience solutions and map out appropriate strategies. In that connection, UN-Habitat had developed the City Resilience Profiling Programme, which was a diagnostic tool that allowed cities to understand the shocks that were or would be affecting them. The Programme also facilitated multi-stakeholder consultations in which captains of industry, community organizations, professional associations and other stakeholders participated in the development of the diagnostic tool in order to design a viable implementation strategy.

11. **Mr. Shank** (Communications Director of the Carbon Neutral Cities Alliance) said that in the United States, many cities had only one city planner or sustainability staffer, who had limited or no access to communicators, given that public affairs officials usually worked with the office of the Mayor. When considering how to increase financing and generate public will and political will to build resiliency, it was very important to examine the resources available to city planners and consider how they could be equipped with the communications skills or staff to raise awareness among the public.

12. **Ms. Odendaal** (Associate Professor in the School of Architecture, Planning and Geomatics, University of Cape Town, South Africa), panellist, accompanying her statement with a digital slide presentation, said that inclusivity must be a part of the discussion about resilience. Her work focused on how technology could assist in creating more inclusive cities. She examined how infrastructures could be harnessed to improve connectivity and provide easier entry points to allow people to pursue their livelihoods on a daily basis. Infrastructures should not function as immutable vehicles of consumption and expansion. Rather, technological innovations should facilitate engagement with city services. Human agency must therefore play a role in the relationship between resilience and infrastructure. The video that had been shown earlier, *Superblocks: How Barcelona is taking city streets back from cars*, demonstrated how a city could engage the local community, both politically and environmentally. Urban planners also had to harness infrastructure in a way that allowed them to consider areas that were often overlooked by smart cities and resilience campaigns. For example, Map Kibera, based in Nairobi, Kenya, was a citizen-driven mapping wiki that allowed people to know their space and neighbourhoods. Additionally, local communities in the global South could access data through the Know Your City campaign, created by Slum/Shack Dwellers International.

13. In order for smart cities to combat challenges to resilience, consideration must be given to the relationship between technology and data and livelihood strategies, and how that relationship could be translated

into successful urban plans and policies. In order to harness technological power to inform policy, the international community must recognize the difference between data and knowledge. Sometimes capturing knowledge relied on human experiences rather than numbers, as was the case with protest actions and social justice issues. It was also important not to impede technology appropriation and innovation, which was necessary to improve the livelihoods of people working in the informal economy and break down the barriers that they faced in making a living. Finally, space was important. There was a resurgence of interest in the role of space in the work of urban planners, who were becoming more attuned to its relational nature. Resilience required an approach that recognized the need for infrastructure to work for the urban poor.

14. **Mr. Shank** (Communications Director of the Carbon Neutral Cities Alliance) wondered whether the public had been meaningfully engaged in managing the Cape Town water crisis.

15. **Ms. Odendaal** (Associate Professor in the School of Architecture, Planning and Geomatics, University of Cape Town, South Africa) said that Cape Town had brought the public into the debate, although perhaps belatedly. To some extent, it had also blamed the public for its water consumption. A partnership-based approach would have been preferable. From a technical and social perspective, the international community should prioritize co-production, which allowed bottom-up solutions to work with official strategies.

16. **Mr. Jinga** (Permanent Representative of Romania to the United Nations; and Chair of the Commission on Population and Development), discussant, said that there must be support for the sustainable management of cities in order to enable them to be drivers of economic growth. Cities had significant potential to promote human health, security, economic activities and livelihoods. It was important to form public-private partnerships, including with small-scale, informal service providers. There must also be a balance between rural and urban needs and development.

17. In order to achieve sustainable development, there must be increased energy efficiency in transport and housing, better access to water and sanitation and improved solid waste management systems. The urban poor must have access to land, housing, services and livelihoods and should be relocated away from environmentally fragile or threatened areas. Efforts should be made to reduce migration from rural to urban areas, promote rural development and encourage industries to relocate. Furthermore, environmental regulations should be strengthened for industries operating within or around large urban centres. Cities and States could best capitalize on the economic recovery by channelling public and private investments to those areas. Given that more than half of the global population lived in cities, strategic policies were needed to improve access to education, health care and housing, as well as to increase productivity and provide more job opportunities while minimizing the adverse impacts of urbanization.

18. The theme of the fifty-first session of the Commission on Population and Development had been "Sustainable cities, human mobility and international migration". A number of States had emphasized the value of remittances. Most of the participating States had reaffirmed their commitment to the human rights of migrants, and many had stressed the need to address the links between urbanization, migration, human mobility, agriculture and rural development. They had emphasized the need to invest in people, especially youth and women, and to provide educational and job opportunities for youth, in particular girls. Several States had considered sexual health and reproductive rights a prerequisite to sustainable development and had advocated for a gender-sensitive approach to family planning. However, the Commission had not reached consensus on adopting the draft resolution on the special theme, as some States had been unable to accept the specific references to sexual and reproductive health, while others had requested the inclusion of a strong sovereignty clause.

19. Speaking in his national capacity, he said that Romania was committed to implementing the 2030 Agenda. The Government had developed a wide range of policies and programmes that aimed to increase the quality of life for its citizens, ensure social cohesion, promote social inclusion, reduce poverty and ensure universal access to health care, education and social protection. In 2018, Romania would present its first voluntary national review during the high-level political forum on sustainable development. Urban development was essential to national growth. A recent analysis prepared by the World Bank had shown that 50 per cent of the population was concentrated in the eight largest metropolitan areas, which generated 75 per cent of national firm revenues. The economic growth in dynamic urban areas had increased the number of commuters and people moving to cities. As a result, integrated transport solutions were needed. Public-private partnerships for smart city projects were facilitated by funds provided by the Government and the European Union. In many cases, the budget was directly managed by local authorities. Municipal governments were also encouraged to cooperate with universities and

other key actors in research and innovation. The largest cities in Romania had pilot projects to implement smart city solutions, such as SMS parking, smart lighting, urban wireless Internet solutions, environmental sensors and video surveillance.

20. **Mr. Hannigan** (Deputy Permanent Representative of Iceland to the United Nations; and Chair of the Commission for Social Development), discussant, said that the Commission for Social Development produced broad policy objectives to help guide national policies. During its fifty-sixth session, the Commission had focused on strategies for eradicating poverty to achieve sustainable development for all, sustainable and resilient societies, and innovation and interconnectivity for social development. Panel discussions had been held on the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing and the New Partnership for Africa's Development. Infrastructure and inequality had featured prominently in the discussions and resulting resolutions. The Commission had emphasized the importance of quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure to support economic development and job creation, with a focus on affordable and equitable access for all. In order to use infrastructure to create jobs and drive the economy, the poor and the unemployed must have access. While the Commission had encouraged States to make public investments in infrastructure, it had also recognized the key role of the private sector and called on States to promote private investments that improved interconnectivity and prioritized social and economic inclusion and accessibility. The Commission had also called on African States to continue to prioritize structural transformation and invest in inclusive and equitable infrastructure projects to provide quality services in areas such as education and health. With regard to city-based solutions, the panel on eradicating poverty had focused on street homelessness, which impacted access to infrastructure and contributed to inequality. Although the 2030 Agenda did not include an indicator for street homelessness, it was visible in all major cities. The number of homeless people, roughly estimated to be 100 million, would continue to grow.

21. The priority theme for the fifty-seventh session of the Commission would be "Addressing inequalities and challenges to inclusion through fiscal, wage and social protection policies", and the Commission would continue to examine sustainable and social development through the lens of inequality. He asked how to strike a balance between ensuring appropriate access to services and financing them. He also wondered how to promote social acceptance for marginalized groups. He agreed that it was important to avoid making decisions that destroyed the lives of some for the benefit of others.

22. **Mr. Shank** (Communications Director of the Carbon Neutral Cities Alliance) said that, in terms of threats to urban resilience or sustainability, terrorism received the most attention and, as a result, individuals had adapted their behaviours accordingly. However, that was not the case for climate change. In the United States, for example, the majority of Americans recognized that climate change was occurring and supported reducing CO2 emissions and increasing funding for renewable energy. Nevertheless, only a minority of the population had adapted their behaviours, which included contacting elected officials or the media and changing shopping or lifestyle habits. He therefore emphasized the need to fund and promote communication, engagement, mobilization and outreach.

23. It would be helpful for the panellists to discuss how their city or organization had influenced public will or political will and how it had engaged in co-production, whether through crowdsourcing, consensus-building or appreciative inquiry. He also asked the panellists to share an exciting solution that was being considered by their city or organization.

24. **Mr. Al-Shawaarbeh** (Mayor of Amman, Jordan) said that the political will of the city of Amman was reflected in its commitment to the Paris Agreement. With regard to public will, participation in decision-making at the grass-roots level directly affected public opinion. Change was usually resisted by those who were affected, but by integrating all groups of society, Governments could ensure the success of any idea. The city's resilience strategy therefore focused on integrating young people in decision-making, improving human resources and empowering women. Cities must consider solutions that could be implemented quickly and directly impact citizens. Strategic plans to improve public transport, for example, had medium- and long-term effects, but they must also include short-term goals.

25. **Mr. Williams** (Director of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)) said that, in terms of mobilizing political will, UN-Habitat had launched the World Urban Forum in collaboration with Member States. The goal of the Forum was not to negotiate a text, but rather to provide an open space for dialogue where people from different perspectives could learn, share experiences and discuss specific issues in their practical work. Participants included slum dwellers, mayors, ministers and representatives of international organizations.

26. Co-production was an important part of building resilient cities, because it recognized the agency of those

who were often excluded from the planning process, as well as the responsibility of the municipal authority to achieve long-term development. Co-production was also a social contract that extended beyond any one administration. For example, the progress that had been made in Barcelona had taken place over the course of twenty years, under three mayors.

27. The reforms to the United Nations development system were profound and would change the way that the Organization worked at the country level, which would have a significant impact on its interactions with cities and its approach to resilience and broader economic development. Those changes had been inspired by the Sustainable Development Goals and would allow the Organization to provide better assistance to Member States in achieving those Goals.

28. Homelessness was a complex issue that affected a diverse population. In the United States, for example, homelessness affected individuals who had been released from prison, those who were unable to access social services, those with psychiatric or mental health problems, those dealing with addiction or drug abuse, and people who were down on their luck and trying to make ends meet. In addition, most people lived on the street rather than in homeless shelters, and their needs should be addressed as well.

29. **Ms. Odendaal** (Associate Professor in the School of Architecture, Planning and Geomatics, University of Cape Town, South Africa) said that the private sector had a significant role to play in enabling inclusive smart and resilient cities. Although there was some debate on who had the authority in public-private partnerships, it was worth examining how those partnerships could enable infrastructure sectors to facilitate more effective city planning and administration.

30. There was tension between the corporate idea of smart cities, which was imposed from above, and a more nuanced approach, in which technology was seen as a way to provide livelihoods. Access to technology meant more than simply Internet access. City governments should take into account the prolific use of mobile phones across economic sectors and social groups. It was important to consider how to facilitate the different entry points to the smart city with a basic smart phone or Wi-Fi access in public spaces. In addition, small-scale financing should not be overlooked in favour of big investments.

31. With regard to co-production, social justice movements in Cape Town had started to shift the conversation to inclusive cities. Through its engagement with oppositional voices, the city government had begun to implement solutions that could have a significant impact on the city. In response to calls for affordable housing in the city centre, the government had devised a more inclusive policy on social housing and the availability of public land in central spaces. With regard to public transport, the initial city plan had been to establish a public transport system that would eventually do away with the informal minibus taxi system. However, her colleagues at the Centre for Transport Studies at the University of Cape Town had been pushing the city to consider hybrid approaches, in which paratransit systems would also be recognized.

32. **Mr. Al-Shawaarbeh** (Mayor of Amman, Jordan) said that financing was a significant challenge for cities. The municipal government in Amman had conducted a self-evaluation to improve the capacities of the finance and administrative teams, and the city's budget had been evaluated and monitored by the World Bank. As a result, the budget was transparent and credible and aligned with governance indicators, which was essential to building public-private partnerships. The city of Amman had contracted solar power projects through build-operate-transfer agreements.

*Panel 2*

33. **Mr. Shank** (Communications Director of the Carbon Neutral Cities Alliance), moderator, said that 75 per cent of the global population would be living in urban settlements by 2050. It was therefore important to focus on sustainability and resilience, as the threats to urban populations would continue to worsen. Furthermore, cities were responsible for approximately 75 per cent of global energy use and greenhouse gas emissions.

34. **Mr. Gutiérrez** (Mayor of Medellín, Colombia), panellist, accompanying his statement with a digital slide presentation, said that many people still remembered the Medellín of the past. While the city recognized that past, above all it looked to the future and could now be considered one of the most innovative cities in the world in terms of social programmes. Cities were the economic drivers of States and played a fundamental role in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. The municipal government of Medellín had therefore incorporated the 2030 Agenda into its city development plan, which included 70 per cent of the Sustainable Development Goal indicators. The plan had also been disseminated to external actors. Colombia had committed to aligning city development plan indicators to the Goals, and if all of the cities in the world would make the same commitment, significant progress would be made by 2030.

35. In 1991, Medellín had been the most violent city in the world, with a rate of 381 murders per 100,000 inhabitants. There had been a sustained decrease in the number of homicides, which was currently between 20 and 23 murders per 100,000 inhabitants, owing to a comprehensive security intervention undertaken by several successive governments with the participation of the public and private sectors, universities and civil society. Public resources had been invested where they had been needed and not simply in the neighbourhoods that had voted for the winning candidates. The biggest investments had been made in the areas with the lowest human development index. Comprehensive urban projects had focused on connecting the city by building transport infrastructure and promoting art and culture, as well as providing access to institutional services such as education, health, infrastructure, sports and security. The public transport system played a crucial role. In cities in Latin America, access to mobility was one of the principal causes of social inequality, as the poorest individuals had to spend the most money and time to move about the city and experienced the most delays. The government had decided that Medellín would become the capital of electric mobility in Latin America by 2030 in order to improve air quality and meet climate change commitments. The first electric buses were already running, and the programme would be expanded across the city.

36. The greening of urban spaces was also important. In Latin America, 80 per cent of the population lived in urban spaces, and that number was expected to reach 85 per cent by 2030. The municipal government was implementing a project that would establish green spaces for pedestrians along major roads, with a view to supporting sustainable mobility and providing peace of mind. In terms of economic development, the city wanted to move towards a knowledge economy. In the twentieth century, Medellín had been the industrial capital of Colombia. While it still relied heavily on industry, the government wished to transform the city into a hub of innovation for Latin America and create high-quality jobs through investments in education, science and technology. Three years earlier, the city had invested 0.74 per cent of its gross domestic product in innovations in science and technology. Currently, it invested 2.14 per cent and would invest 3 per cent by 2021.

37. Medellín was no longer the city it had been in the 1990s, but if its citizens did not tell their story, then others would tell it for them. For that reason, symbols of violence were being transformed into symbols of hope. For example, the Monaco Building, which had belonged to a drug trafficking family, would be demolished in January 2019, and a park would be built in its place to honour the victims. The city had also committed to prioritizing victims rather than victimizers and investing in family, education and values. He invited the international community to continue to work with Medellín and hoped that the United Nations could call on all cities to analyse their contributions to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.

38. **Mr. Shank** (Communications Director of the Carbon Neutral Cities Alliance) wondered what terminology was used to communicate the city's robust Sustainable Development Goals agenda to its citizens.

39. **Mr. Gutiérrez** (Mayor of Medellín, Colombia) said that the local government had explained to each of the communities the responsibility that they had to the planet. It would be impossible to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals without the participation of all citizens; those Goals could not simply be the goals of the President and his cabinet or the mayors. For example, in order to reduce $CO_2$ emissions, citizens must understand that they needed to use the public transport system more often. The government also emphasized the importance of education and water conservation. The Goals were communicated to citizens in clear, concrete terms so that they could understand their contribution to a better Medellín and a better planet. The underlying term was sustainability, which was essential to progress.

40. **Mr. Zarrilli** (Chief Resilience Officer of New York City, United States of America), panellist, accompanying his statement with a digital slide presentation, said that, in many ways, the resilience journey of New York City had begun with Hurricane Sandy, which had resulted in the deaths of 44 people and caused $19 billion in damages and lost economic activity. That natural disaster, the worst in the city's history, had increased awareness about the wider set of threats facing the city, such as the growing risks related to climate change. As a coastal city with 520 miles of shoreline, New York City was threatened by rising sea levels and coastal storms, in addition to the increasing threats from heat and rain.

41. In 2015, New York City had partnered with 100 Resilient Cities to release its OneNYC strategy, which had been the world's first resilience strategy. It incorporated the Sustainable Development Goals and identified a number of challenges and how to tackle them. For example, it addressed the growing inequality crisis, as approximately 45 per cent of inhabitants were living at or near the poverty line. The ageing infrastructure required continued investments and alternative solutions to mobility and the provision of

vital public services. The population of the city would reach 9 million by 2040, which would provide challenges as well as opportunities for managing growth and improving the lives of citizens.

42. Under the OneNYC strategy, the city sought to manage growth, provide affordable housing, invest in alternative modes of transport, grow the economy and increase job opportunities. The government had committed to lifting 800,000 New Yorkers out of poverty over ten years, including through targeted wage improvements and education opportunities. It had also committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 80 per cent by 2050 and achieving zero waste by 2030 and had launched a $20 billion resiliency programme. As a result of the OneNYC strategy, jobs were at record highs; crime was lower than it had been since the 1950s; the air and surrounding waterways were cleaner than they had been in decades; and neighbourhoods were safer, more affordable and more environmentally friendly. Moreover, the city had raised the bar on climate leadership by taking the fight to the fossil fuel companies that had created the crisis.

43. With regard to climate change, the city was aligned with the Paris Agreement. It addressed the root causes of climate change, continued to cut greenhouse gas emissions, promoted electric vehicles and pursued the first-ever building retrofit mandates for the worst polluting buildings, which accounted for most of the city's greenhouse gas emissions. Under the $20 billion resiliency programme, the city partnered with public and private infrastructure providers to upgrade vital public services in telecommunications, energy and water. It also continued to design flood maps that more accurately reflected risk. With regard to accountability, in January 2018, the mayor and other leaders across the city had announced that pension funds would be divested from fossil fuel reserve owners, which accounted for $5 billion of the $190 billion in pension funds. The city was no longer willing to participate in a system that was destroying the planet. It had also filed suit against the five largest fossil fuel companies for the damages they had caused. Additionally, the municipal government had just announced that it would be performing the first-ever voluntary local review for the Sustainable Development Goals, and a progress report would be released in the summer of 2018.

44. The challenges facing cities could not be addressed by silos or one-time projects. Municipal governments must recognize the threats stemming from climate change and inequality and institutionalize resilience in all activities, such as building and zoning codes, laws, flood maps and design principles.

45. **Mr. Shank** (Communications Director of the Carbon Neutral Cities Alliance) asked whether the discussion surrounding resilience was framed to match the culture of New York City.

46. **Mr. Zarrilli** (Chief Resilience Officer of New York City, United States of America) said that, when discussing necessary actions, changes were needed at the institutional level and in lives of individuals. While the citizens were pleased that the city was fighting for them, the government needed to ensure that the choices made by individuals were also a part of that solution, such was how they used energy or moved about the city. When citizens were willing to make changes in their own lives, it provided the political support needed to take on the larger institutional fights.

47. **Ms. Wynhoven** (Representative of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU)), panellist, said that, modern societies around the world had developed a growing dependency on information and communications technologies (ICTs) in the operation and management of critical infrastructures. As a result, they were increasingly vulnerable to cyberrisks. Cybersecurity had become one of the most difficult global challenges, and the annual global cost of cybercrime was estimated to total $600 billion. Building resilient and sustainable societies required holistic action at all levels.

48. Smart, sustainable cities were highly dependent on ICTs. Higher volumes of data and increased complexity provided new opportunities for malicious cyberattacks and data loss, including as a result of natural disasters. With the appropriate processes in place and through multi-stakeholder collaboration and good governance, technology could provide solutions to cybersecurity, information protection and system resilience. In order to guarantee service continuity and integrity, cybersecurity and resilience must be given consideration from the initial development stages of ICT systems that monitored and controlled smart, sustainable cities. Security and trust were paramount in ICT development and adoption. While ICTs could provide enormous benefits, they could also entail security risks, infrastructure disruption, data breaches and increased costs. Nevertheless, they would be necessary to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, and the potential risks should not be a deterrent.

49. Cities and States at an early stage in their digital transition could benefit from the experiences and good practices of others to establish a robust and secure digital ecosystem that could underpin their society and economy. Stakeholders must prioritize sustainable and secure ICT access. Their coordination was vital to

ensuring that all individuals could benefit from safe and secure connectivity.

50. The ITU Global Cybersecurity Agenda, which had been launched in 2007, was built on five strategic pillars: legal measures, technical and procedural measures, organizational structures, capacity-building and international cooperation. While cyberattacks might not always be preventable, a holistic approach to ICT security could help to put protections in place, thereby increasing resilience. ITU facilitated the World Summit on the Information Society action line on building confidence and security in the use of ICTs and contributed to the World Summit on the Information Society-Sustainable Development Goals Matrix in order to identify areas in which security and the use of ICTs could foster and accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, including access to electronic financial services, access to online information as part of education, empowerment of women, development of resilient infrastructure, sustainable economic growth and the transition to smart cities. Through the national computer incident response team programme, ITU worked with States to build their capacity to respond to cyberattacks and to protect critical infrastructure. The Global Cybersecurity Index, which was a multi-stakeholder initiative to measure commitments to cybersecurity, provided a means for States to benchmark their approach to cybersecurity and identify opportunities for improvement. ITU had also published a national cybersecurity strategy guide to provide a starting point for States to develop a cohesive framework with a view to implementing a coordinated response to cyberthreats with the involvement of all government sectors as well as key national stakeholders. The primary aim of the "United for Smart Sustainable Cities" initiative was to advocate for public policy in which ICTs, and ICT standards in particular, played a definitive role in the transition to smart, sustainable cities. The initiative helped to facilitate cooperation, draft guidelines, establish key performance indicators and share case studies on issues such as financing, smart cities, blockchain, artificial intelligence and circular cities. She invited all cities to participate in that programme.

51. Cybersecurity was an issue that affected every State. Governments, industry and other institutions must share experiences and expertise to strengthen capacities to protect against cyberattacks, as collaboration would be critical to achieving all of the Sustainable Development Goals.

52. **Mr. Shank** (Communications Director of the Carbon Neutral Cities Alliance) asked whether there was a looming cyberthreat of which people were unaware.

53. **Ms. Wynhoven** (Representative of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU)) said that, while strengthening infrastructure played a critical role in cybersecurity, individual behaviours were also important. Individuals must be informed and protect themselves against cyberthreats, as it was easy to feel a false sense of security.

54. **Mr. Shank** (Communications Director of the Carbon Neutral Cities Alliance) said that security breaches were the future of warfare between non-State actors. He asked if there was an exciting solution that she would like to share.

55. **Ms. Wynhoven** (Representative of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU)) said that the potential of ICTs to assist in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals was incredible, and the international community needed to maximize their use. Currently, half of the global population was not connected, and among those who were, many did not have good connectivity and could not fully benefit from ICTs. For that reason, Member States had called for universal access to ICTs by 2020, and much progress still needed to be made. When considering the potential advances from artificial intelligence and blockchain, it was important not to lose focus on closing digital divides, especially for marginalized groups and women and girls.

56. **Mr. Ponce Gandarillas** (Co-Founder and Chief Executive Officer of CityHeroes Incorporated), panellist, accompanying his statement with a digital slide presentation, said that CityHeroes was a technology start-up working with Governments, public agencies and other institutions to help build better and safer cities by combining web, mobile and hardware technologies to connect government authorities, the private sector and citizens. It focused on providing solutions for the inefficiency of the workforce on the ground, the excessive time and cost of collecting and processing information and the absence of communication channels between authorities, companies and citizens. Those problems cost cities and companies millions of dollars every day.

57. The platform designed by CityHeroes worked on four levels. The first level allowed cities and companies to better manage their workforce and assets on the ground. In the public sector, for example, cities could monitor and manage government inspectors, police officers, firefighters and any other city employees working in the field. In the private sector, the platform could be used to monitor salespeople or supervisors.

Cities and companies that had used the platform had greatly improved the efficiency of their teams. The second level of the platform allowed employees to send activity reports in real time. The third level allowed operation centres and administrators to gather and process that information in order to improve awareness of the activities on the ground. The fourth level allowed organizations to open a direct channel of communication with citizens. For example, the platform could be used to map mosquito populations with input from citizens, which would help to facilitate an immediate response from the private sector and government officials.

58. Unfortunately, CityHeroes had encountered barriers, in particular in working with the public sector, which needed to be addressed to facilitate the implementation of any project. For example, in their contracting processes, city governments had been unaccustomed to working with start-ups. As a result, CityHeroes had been asked to go through endless public tenders or to freeze $0.5 million in order to participate. Additionally, many of the politicians had not understood the purpose of the platform and wanted to use it only to connect with citizens with a view to benefiting their political brand by providing the community with technological innovations. However, the largest barrier was corruption. CityHeroes had spent two years attempting to close a deal with a local government in Latin America only for officials to request a bribe. While the contract would have been extremely beneficial, CityHeroes had backed out owing to its commitment to reject corruption. In his view, corruption had a significant impact on resilience and sustainability and should feature in the current discussion.

59. Resilience did not require cutting edge technology; there were many simple solutions available that could make a difference. It was important to go back to basics, establish core values and connect with the right people who were willing to take the right actions.

60. **Mr. Shank** (Communications Director of the Carbon Neutral Cities Alliance) asked how CityHeroes was able to use its brand to get buy-in for the work that they were doing.

61. **Mr. Ponce Gandarillas** (Co-Founder and Chief Executive Officer of CityHeroes Incorporated) said that "city heroes" was both the company name and the product. Their goal had been to empower citizens to be real heroes and work with authorities and the private sector.

62. **Ms. Burmanje** (Chair of the Executive Board, Land Registry and Mapping Agency, Netherlands; and Co-Chair of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management), discussant, said that the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management sought to play an important role in setting the agenda for the development of geospatial information and to promote its use to address key global challenges. The Committee served as a forum in which Member States could coordinate with each other and with international organizations. Since its first meeting in 2011, the scope of its work had expanded to include the Sustainable Development Goals, the implementation of standards, the integration of geospatial statistics and related information, and the determination of fundamental data sets. The geospatial and statistical communities were strong contributors to sustainable development and had partnered with stakeholders in other sectors, including health, energy and food. Sustainable development could only be realized if the international community acknowledged the changes that were taking place in societies and cities, which included climate change, digitalization, urbanization and the depletion of natural resources.

63. The Committee recognized the need to leverage geospatial information management technologies and innovations to build resilience and reduce threats from unsustainable production and resource consumption, pollution levels, disaster risks and climate change. A smart, data-driven geostatistical approach should be taken with regard to population growth. Censuses, household surveys, registers, administrative data, address postal codes and other measures allowed economic and environmental data to be combined with location-based information to understand local contexts and dynamics. She wondered how cities could ensure a healthy urban environment in the face of housing shortages, rising prices, increased mobility and a growing global economy that facilitated mass migration. She also asked how technology could be used to manage mobility and public services in that context.

64. In designing resilient and sustainable infrastructure, cities and States prioritized a liveable, safe and pleasant environment for citizens, which required clever solutions that could be achieved with smart technology. Although there had been rapid development in applied technology and digitalization, fragmented initiatives and small-scale ideas sometimes hampered efforts to meet global challenges. It was therefore important to employ integrated approaches across sectors and undertake joint initiatives. As the volume of data traffic increased, the demand for high-speed connectivity was growing. As a result, there was a need for digital infrastructure, which should include components of digital city models such as connection

networks and smart devices for location-based services. Inclusion was also essential to resilience. However, inclusion also implied that everyone needed to participate in resilience initiatives. Technology and innovation blurred the lines between the traditional roles of Governments and citizens, and initiatives could be implemented on a global scale or in an individual's backyard.

65. While the challenges were immense, geospatial information, technology innovation platforms and solutions that were facilitated by strong public-private partnerships gave States the necessary means to develop an accessible, standards-driven, interoperable local to global system-of-systems. Nevertheless, geospatial information could provide only insight; public will and political will was essential to progress.

66. **Mr. Shank** (Communications Director of the Carbon Neutral Cities Alliance) said that it would be helpful for the panellists to discuss how their city or organization had influenced public will or political will. He also asked them to share an example of co-production and an exciting solution that was being considered by their city or organization.

67. In a social contract, cities and States were asking individuals to change their behaviour. He therefore called on participants to consider what had caused them to make the necessary changes in their lives, with a view to identifying issues that could encourage public and political will.

68. **Mr. Zarrilli** (Chief Resilience Officer of New York City, United States of America) said that promoting personal lifestyle changes could build public support for larger initiatives. The city of New York had a programme called GreeNYC, which was designed to target behaviours that could be changed at the individual level. It was a light-hearted campaign that focused on waste, plastics and organics recycling, as well as energy choices and how to weatherize a home or apartment. When aggregated, those simple changes could have a big impact and could stimulate the larger social change that was needed to address the challenges of climate change and resilience.

69. **M. Gutiérrez** (Mayor of Medellín, Colombia) said that national Governments, local governments and multilateral partnerships understood the changes that needed to be made, but every individual had to be invested to achieve those goals. The international community must therefore focus on changing city culture. Each person must feel that those changes were valuable and contributed to development. His administration had recently begun a campaign that focused on rewarding positive behaviours rather than framing the discussion in negative terms. The city would recognize those who most frequently used public transport, as well as the neighbourhood or community with the largest decrease in violence.

70. In order to combat corruption, it was important to understand the origins of that culture. Civic trust was fundamental to making progress. In that connection, his office had experimented by setting up six unattended shops in busy areas across the city, equipped with a cash box, a mirror and a sign that said, "We trust you". At the end of the experiment, there had been 97 per cent compliance. It was important to empower and trust citizens. Each individual must understand that achieving the Sustainable Development Goals depended on them, and his office was ensuring that each community knew that it had the power to improve the city.

71. **Mr. Ponce Gandarillas** (Co-Founder and Chief Executive Officer of CityHeroes Incorporated) said that a number of entrepreneurs felt that it was not possible to change the culture of corruption in Latin America. It was therefore important to show them that it was possible, and sometimes that meant turning down opportunities.

72. **Ms. Wynhoven** (Representative of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU)) said that, when implementing technological solutions, it was important to consider whether women and girls had equal opportunities to access and develop technology. In that connection, EQUALS was a global network that focused on bridging the digital gender divide. It dealt with issues such as access, skills and leadership and worked to increase the visibility of women's contributions. Too often, the role of women and girls did not receive enough attention, but everyone needed to be engaged in order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and build sustainable and resilient societies.

73. **Ms. Mejía Vélez** (Colombia), said that the United Nations system was still far from achieving gender parity, and she wondered how the governments of New York City and Medellín were working to achieve that goal. For those in the United Nations system that had negotiated the 2030 Agenda, it had not been easy to spread the message, and she wondered how those municipal governments had promoted the Sustainable Development Goals.

74. **Mr. Shank** (Communications Director of the Carbon Neutral Cities Alliance) said that it was hard to rally the public in support of what appeared to be distant goals, such as those set for 2030 or 2050. He wondered how the international community could quickly and compellingly convey that the future was not so distant.

75. **Mr. Gutiérrez** (Mayor of Medellín, Colombia) said that, with regard to women, more improvement was needed in several areas, in both Medellín and Latin America. There must be more women in power. In Medellín, 60 per cent of senior positions in the municipal administration were held by women, owing to their qualifications and not to gender quotas. The international community must also combat violence against women and girls. Economic dependency was the main reason that women did not report spousal abuse. The Medellín Secretariat for Women therefore promoted opportunities for education, economic development and entrepreneurship, especially for victims of violence. The government had also strengthened the municipal family courts to provide justice for citizens, in particular women. It was also important to combat adolescent pregnancies, which continued to be a complex issue in Latin America. Lastly, there must be safe spaces and opportunities for women and girls.

76. **Mr. Pineda** (Mexico) wondered how the mayor of Medellín would ensure that the work he had accomplished would continue under the next administration.

77. **Mr. Shank** (Communications Director of the Carbon Neutral Cities Alliance) said that the necessary human agency was in place with regard to the threat of terrorism to urban resilience and sustainability. He hoped that the same level would be in place for climate-related threats in the future. The international community must mobilize around those other pervasive threats.

*The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.*